

GRIMGRIMOIRE

Official Strategy Guide

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NIS America

DoubleJump BOOKS



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Introduction

GrimGrimoire is an unusual game, both for the PS2 hardware and NIS America as a publisher: a side-scrolling 2D RTS. The game itself is packed with extensive tutorials and data about your units, so just getting started on Lillet Blan's magic school adventure won't be hard for you. What might get frustrating is the trial and error involved in finishing a stage.

Like most RTS, *GrimGrimoire* implements a "fog of war" effect. This means you can only see enemy units onscreen when they're near your own units. Areas of the map you don't have any units in go dark. You may spend several losing games just scouting out the map, and then finally plan a winning assault based on what you've learned.

If you want to cut down on that repetition, this mini-guide's for you. Think of it as Lillet's personal cheat sheet (if she was the sort of person who cheated on tests, anyways). The *GrimGrimoire* Map Guide presents detailed information about the location of enemy Runes and terrain features for each of the game's fifty battles. This effectively cuts through the "fog of war" and lets you plan your assault on the enemy as if you could survey the entire map at once.

Reading the Maps

Each level map in *GrimGrimoire* is actually part of a cleverly constructed grid. The size of the grid varies in some levels, but most of the time it's 14 squares by 14 squares. The rows form floors, connected by stairways at different points in a map. These areas are strategic, since all non-flying units have to use them to change levels.

Of course, most levels aren't just nice, wide expanses of open floor. There are a variety of terrain features you have to deal with while moving your armies around the map. There are pits and columns only flying units can pass easily, and special columns that can be broken by large units. You need to take these terrain features into account when planning your army's composition and movements.

Note that while the maps do list locations of enemy Runes, they don't list the location of all enemies on a map. There are some levels where certain types of enemies spawn at fixed locations or times regardless of what Runes are left on the field. Usually the map's advice section addresses noteworthy or dangerous spawns that are tied to particular times or locations, but some of these details will change according to the difficulty level you're playing on.

The various Runes on a map have different alignments you need to consider. There are Runes you can control and use, and enemy Runes you need to destroy. There are allied Runes you can take control of, and there may be different factions among the enemy forces. All of these details are spelled out on the map labels.

What follows is a general key that lists all of the terrain features and Rune types you may encounter as part of a *GrimGrimoire* level map.



Map Legend


Pit - Flying and giant-size creatures can traverse these areas, but not ordinary units.


Stairway - Walking units need stairways to move from floor to floor. Fortifying them is important to defending your Runes and Crystals.


Column - Any unit that can pass over a pit can pass over a column. You can't build Runes or Symbols over Columns.


Breakable Column - Can be smashed down by attacks from Dragons or Chimeras, letting walking units pass through the area. Otherwise behaves like an ordinary Column. Dragons are more likely to break them than Chimeras.


Crystal - Used as sources of mana. You can't check how much mana is in a Crystal until it becomes a Sanctuary. When a Crystal's mana is reduced to 0, it disappears.



Fairy Ring - Spawns Fairies and Elves.



Titania - Spawns the Morning Star and strengthens all Glamour creatures.



Wicca - Spawns Unicorns and lets Elves advent Talismans.



Hades Gate - Spawns Phantoms and Ghosts.



Acheron - Spawns Charon.



Purgatory - Spawns Skullmages, strengthens all Necromancy creatures, and lets Ghosts advent Obelisks.



Hell Gate - Spawns Imps and Demons.



Chaos Nest - Spawns Dragons and Grimalkin.



Gehenna - Strengthens all Sorcery creatures and lets Imps advent Guardians.



Laboratory - Spawns Blobs and Homonculus.



Chimera Spawn - Spawns Chimera.



Engraver - Spawns Golems, allows Blobs to advent Gargoyles, and strengthens Golems and Gargoyles.



Friendly Rune - A rune you control during the battle. Some battles call for you to protect your Runes. A Rune that appears on the map with no halo is a friendly Rune.



Enemy Rune - A rune you don't control during the battle. Most fights call for you to destroy them. Can influence the way monsters spawn in a battle. In-game, indicated by red life bars. On the maps, indicated by a red halo around the Rune.

Map Legend



Allied Rune - These Runes start yellow in-game, and turn green if one of your creatures pass it. This lets you control the Rune and its creatures as if you had built it yourself. On the maps, indicated by a blue halo around the Rune.



Character Rune - Some battles involve three factions, with different characters controlling the two rival armies. Usually there's one army you want to attack and another you want to leave alone. On the maps, the one you want to attack is in an orange halo, and the one you want to leave alone is in a violet halo.

Notes on Difficulty

The advice accompanying each map is usually very general, mostly designed to get you started in thinking about how to approach the map. Some maps have more puzzle-like aspects, and for these levels the guide offers more specific advice. How someone plays an RTS is a very personal thing, of course, so you may find the guide's strategies don't fit the way you like to play the game. In that case, feel free to ignore them and just use the map data to go your own way.

The guide strategies were composed with the game's three default difficulty levels (Sweet, Easy, and Normal) in mind. The differences between the difficulty levels are numerous, including:

- ***Total amount of mana available***

Each Crystal on a map contains a finite amount of mana. Highlight it once it's converted into a Sanctuary to see how much mana you can harvest from it. On higher difficulty levels, each Crystal on a map may hold less mana.



- ***Mana mining rates***

On low difficulty levels, your mining creatures can mine twenty-five mana per trip when harvesting a Crystals. On Normal difficulty, they mine twelve mana per trip.

- ***Enemy types encountered***

On lower difficulty levels, some enemy types may not spawn in a level. For instance, in a level with a Chaos Nest, you may not encounter Dragons on Sweet difficulty, but later encounter them on Normal or Hard.

- ***Frequency of enemy spawns***

Sometimes enemy spawns are tied to the game's clock. A monster that appears after, say, two minutes of play on Normal may not appear at all on Sweet.



Notes on Difficulty

• ***Aggression of enemies***
On lower difficulty levels, enemies are more likely to let you pass through their territory or even attack without retaliating. On Normal and Hard, enemies are more likely to retaliate fiercely after you begin attacking a nearby area. This is especially true of Fairies and Demons.

Which difficulty level you choose to play the game on is a matter of personal taste. If you're only interested in seeing the game's Story mode and don't want to spend a lot of time on the battles, then there's no reason not to play through on Sweet or Easy. You can simply ignore the Trial maps, which have no story attached.

If you enjoy the game's battles for their own sake, then you should play on Normal. Once you've beaten each of the 25 Story and Trial maps of the game on Normal difficulty, you unlock a fourth difficulty level, Hard. On Hard difficulty, you can expect more aggressive enemies, more mana constraints, and more enemy spawns in some levels. If you can beat all 50 of the game's battles on Hard difficulty, you have completely mastered *GrimGrimoire*.

Notes on Score

After you finish a battle, your victory screen grants you a score based on your performance. Your score is based on the four main factors you see on the victory screen: mana mined, units created, units lost, enemies killed, and completion time. The most important of these factors is number of units lost.



The highest possible score in *GrimGrimoire* is 9999999. If you're playing on low difficulties and get this score, that's a sign you could probably handle something higher. For the most part, GrimGrimoire scores your performance by starting with a perfect 9999999 score and subtracting for "mistakes" in your gameplay. The two most severely punished mistakes are losing a lot of units and spending a long time clearing a map. Some activities, like creating units, killing enemies, and mining mana can have a positive effect on your score and offset mistakes.

Scoring also changes based on difficulty level. On lower difficulty levels, mistakes are punished by bigger score deductions than they are on higher difficulty levels. This is essentially to compensate for the fact that on higher difficulty, some levels practically force you to make "mistakes" like losing units. It's also harder to create lots of units, mine mana, or do other things that can help build up your score.

For the most part, this guide doesn't take your likely score into account when giving battle advice. There are two reasons for this. One, score is not

Notes on Score

relevant to your progress. A level you squeak through with a miserable two-digit score is still as "beaten" as a level you get a perfect score on. The game doesn't track your scores or save statistics, either, so if you do get a perfect score, there's no way to show it to anyone else unless you take a picture of it.

Score is important largely because it indicates what a "perfect" battle in *GrimGrimoire* is supposed to be. You're supposed to play efficiently and quickly, without letting significant numbers of units get killed. Tactics that involve sacrificing lots of units to beat a stage or very long build-up times may work, but are counter to the spirit of the game. So, if you use them, the game is going to give you a "bad grade".

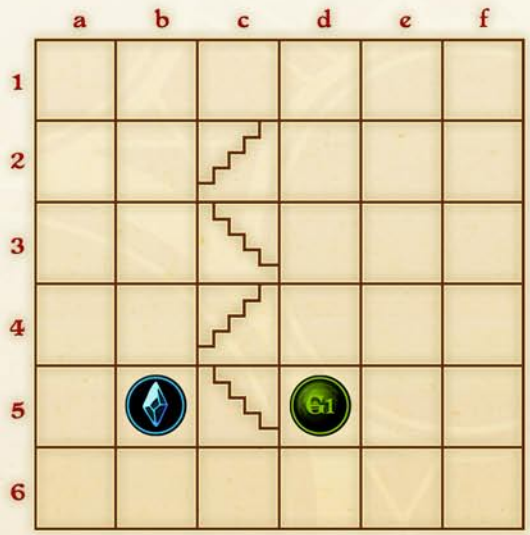
Whether or not you care about that is up to you as a player, of course. Some players may find replaying battles to try and figure out how to get perfect scores addicting, while others may find it pointless or frustrating. For most players, just keep in mind that any six or seven-digit score can be taken as a sign of good performance on a given map.





Loop One, Day One & Two



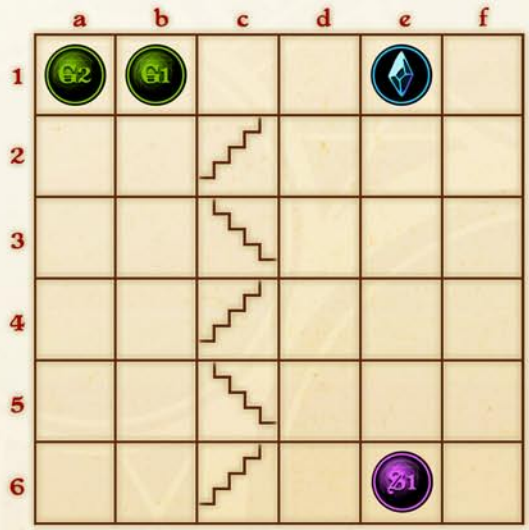


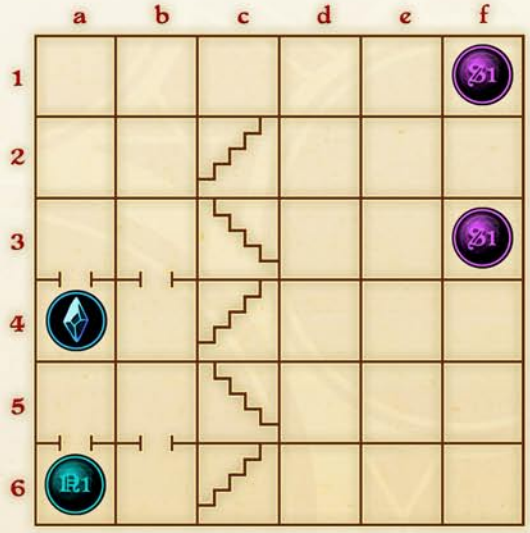
Day 1:
A very simple tutorial battle. Follow Gammel's instructions as they appear on-screen and you can't lose.

Day 2:
Your first "real" battle. Your Fairies and Elves begin at block D1, at the top of the map, and have to move down toward your Fairy Ring and the Crystal at Row 5. After the tutorial portion ends, just manufacture Fairies as fast as you can. Send Fairy groups toward the dark portions of the screen to find the Imps hiding there. Once your Fairies find enemies, they'll begin attacking automatically, so victory only requires persistence.



Loop One, Day Three & Four

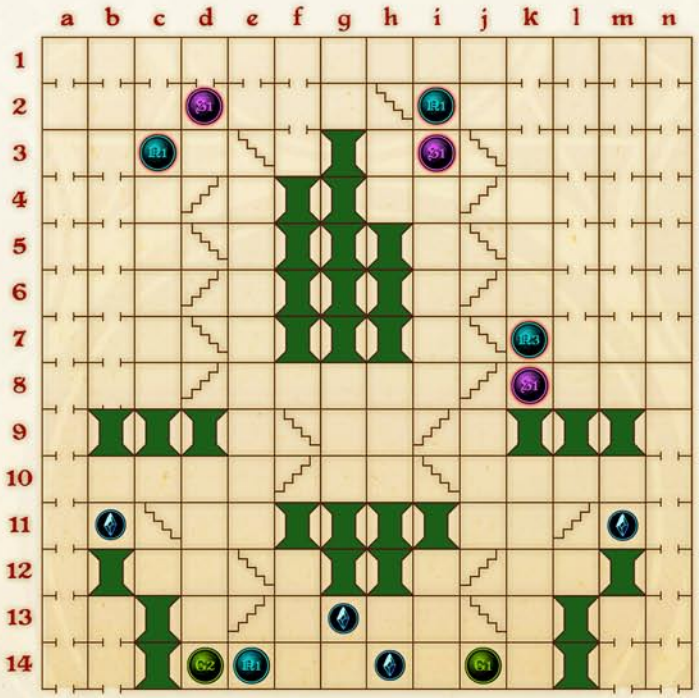




Day 3:
Your Runes are in no danger thanks to the Talismans at c1, so focus on offense. The Imps that occasionally spawn are no threat, but you want to destroy the Guardians at d6 and f6 before you start attacking the Hell Gate. Spawn Fairies in groups of five and send them out to attack as quickly as you can. Ideally, try to have a group of Fairies attacking each of the Guardians at once, so they're less likely to be overwhelmed. Monitor your Fairies as they attack, since the AI may start going after the Hell Gate too soon.

Day 4:
The tutorial in this level is very misleading. Necromancy's Astral beings aren't the least bit immune to attacks from Sorcery creatures. This being said, Necromancy does very heavy damage to Sorcery, and takes reduced damage from Sorcery's attacks. You can't use a single Phantom to solo this stage, but you can dominate it with just a handful of them. Simply send the Phantom you made in the tutorial up to stand guard next to your Crystal at a4, which is very vulnerable to attack by enemy Imps. Next, make at least one more Phantom to help defend your Crystal. The two Phantoms should attack approaching Imps automatically, so just moving them into place is a good defense. Once they're in place, make five more Phantoms and send them to attack the Guardian stationed at f2. Your Phantoms will make short work of it, and will probably go after the Hell Gate at f1 automatically after that. Once the Hell Gate at f1 is destroyed, command them to attack the one that remains at f3 for the win.

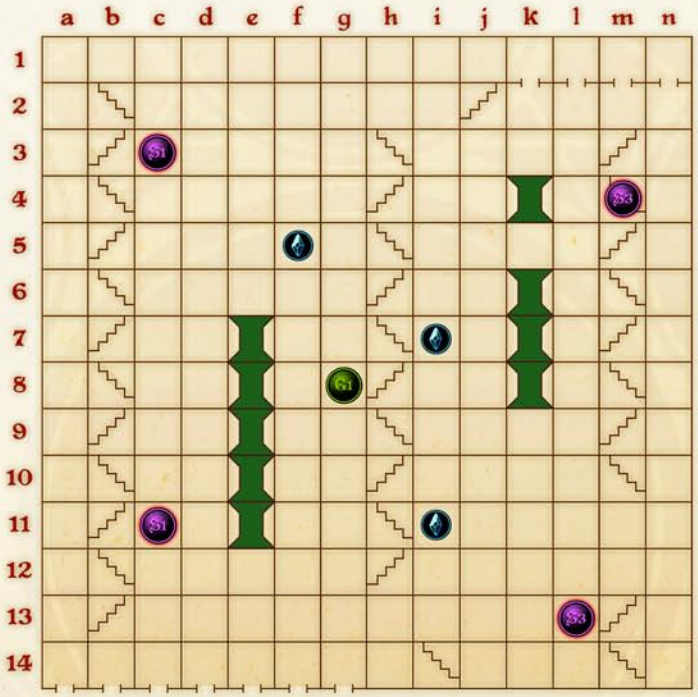
Loop One, Day Five



The best defense is a strong offense. First begin by generating enough Phantoms and Fairies to let you seize control of the Crystals at b11 and m11. Build a second Fairy Ring on the left side of the map and a second Hades Gate on the right. Spare a few Elves to fortify the stairwells nearby with Talismans. Then begin generating groups of Phantoms and Fairies as quick as the game lets you. It doesn't hurt to keep Elves with your Phantoms to heal them, or to have a Ghost pave the way for a group of Fairies with a Charge. Have your Fairy and Phantom groups work together to take advantage of enemy weaknesses.

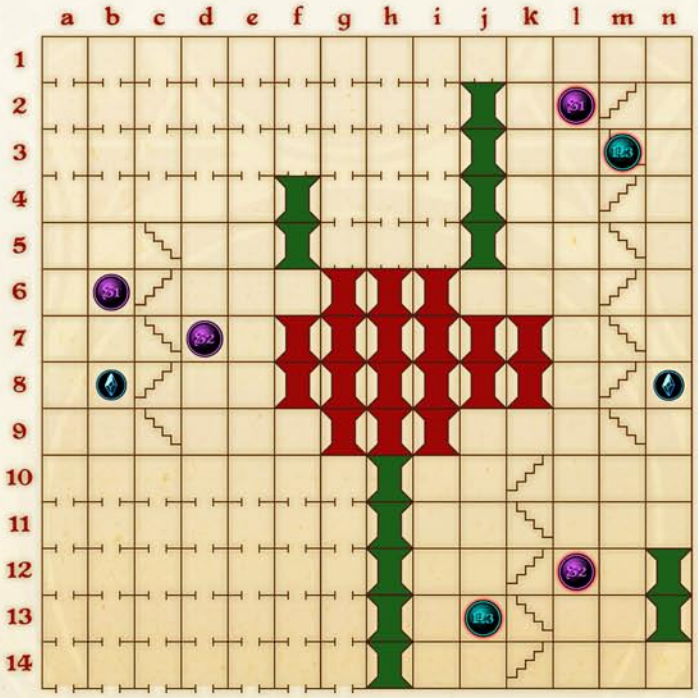
Focus on assaulting the enemy Runes on the right side of the map first, taking out Guardians and any enemies you encounter along the way. On the left side of the map, just focus on keeping enemies away from your territory. Once you've wiped out all of the Runes on the right hand side, swarm your forces toward the surviving Runes on the left. Be patient, and make sure you focus on pushing back the enemy over everything else. Chances are the twenty minutes will run out before you destroy all of the Runes, but keeping pressure on enemy forces ensures you'll survive.

Loop Two, Day One



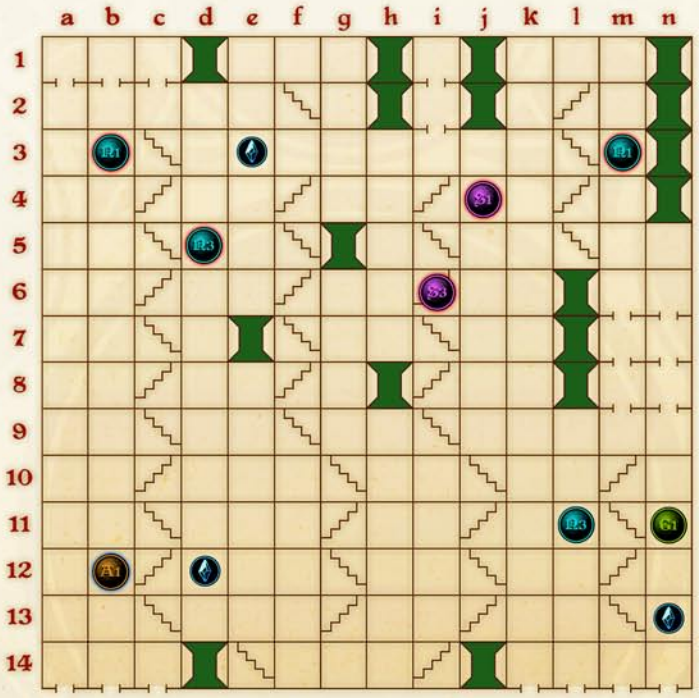
On this map, keep your Fairies close to your Runes so they can defend you while you build up your real attacking force. Get your Elves started on harvesting mana at the Crystal at i7. Build a Wicca Rune at f8, and a Hades Gate at f7. Create some Ghosts to harvest the Crystal at f5. Level all of your Runes up to their maximums. Next, create five Unicorns and five Phantoms. When all ten units are complete, send them to assault the enemy Rune at m4 together. Be sure to take out any Guardians or Demons you encounter before moving on. You'll find your Unicorns defeat Guardians easily, but to defeat Demons you need to have all of your Unicorns use their Barrier ability while all of your Phantoms use Berserker. Once the first Rune is down, move counter-clockwise around the map to take out the other Runes. Make more Unicorns and Phantoms as necessary to replace any you lose, but you shouldn't need additional groups of attackers.

Loop Two, Day Two



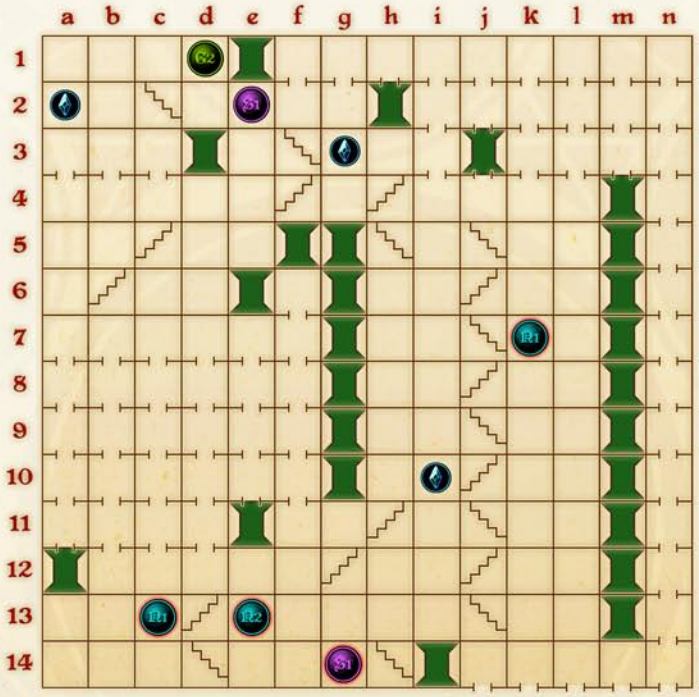
Make a Dragon Egg immediately. The very moment it appears, give it the Hatch command. While you wait, get your Imps to work harvesting mana and make a Grimalkin. If you're speedy enough, your Dragon Egg hatches into a Dragon just as Advocat's Dragon comes barreling down at you. Use your Grimalkin to put it to sleep, and then your Dragon should make short work of it. Send this Dragon to attack Advocat's Chaos Nest at l12. Have a Grimalkin follow in his wake just in case, but your Dragon should obliterate everything in its path. With the mana you've stored up, make another Dragon and send it toward the Hell Gate at l2 with a Grimalkin follower. If you like, make a few more Dragons as reinforcements. Once the Sorcery Runes are destroyed, take out the Necromancy Runes at m3 and j13.

Loop Two, Day Three



First, send some Fairies over to the Alchemy creatures clustered around b12. Once they pass by, the allied creatures turn green and become controllable. Have the Blobs gather mana, leave the Golems where they are to defend the stairwell, upgrade the Laboratory Rune, and manufacture a few Homonculus. On the other side of the map, have your Elves begin harvesting the crystal at n13. Upgrade your Fairy Ring all the way, and construct a Wicca Rune around l12. Upgrade your Wicca all the way, and begin making Unicorns. Make Fairies to fight alongside them. Don't invest in the Skullmages or the Purgatory Rune that spawns them, as they're not great attackers or defenders. Send groups of Unicorns reinforced by Fairies toward Opalneria's runes, taking out Guardians and other monsters along the way. When Necromancy creatures start swarming your attackers, use the Homonculus's Flare ability. This makes Necromancy's Astral creatures take tremendous damage from attacks, and should make it easier to wade through the enemies. It's easiest to start smashing Runes with the Gehenna at i6, then the Runes to the upper right of it, and then the remaining Runes on the upper left.

Loop Two, Day Four

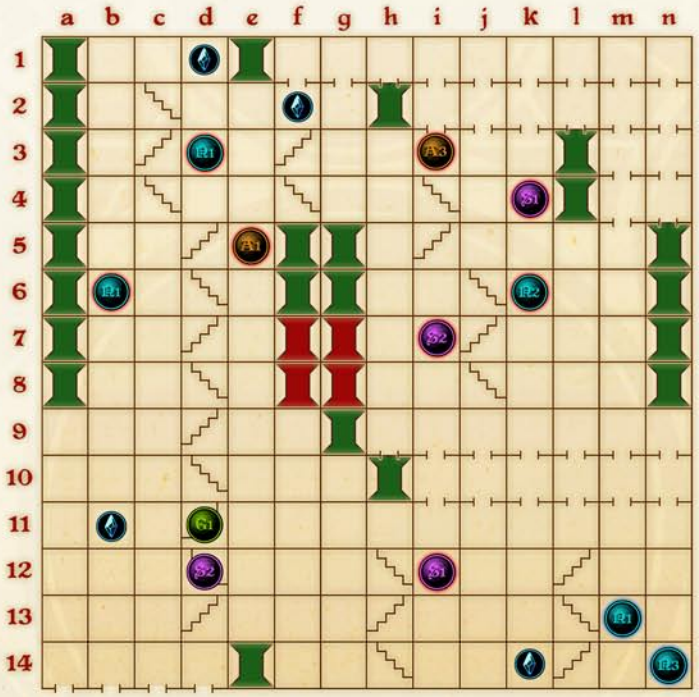


Start leveling up your Titania Rune. Have your Imps start gathering mana from the Crystal at g3. Next, build a Fairy Ring at c2. Set your Elves to work gathering mana from the Crystal at a2. When your Titania Rune is maxed out, create your Morning Star and immediately have her charge up five starchild bullets. Then start leveling up your Hell Gate to its maximum, so you can create Demons. When that's done, max out your Fairy Ring so you can make more Fairies and use Elves to heal.

While you're working on your Runes and making troops, enemies will stream up from the enemy Hades Gate at k7 to attack your Fairy Ring at c2, and Charons attack from the cluster of Runes at rows 13 and 14. Use Morning Star and some Fairy reinforcements to fight off the Charons, and use your Demons to defend your Crystal. When you've got an opening and a group of at least five Demons, send them out to kill everything in the area of the k7 Hades Gate. Make reinforcements as necessary.

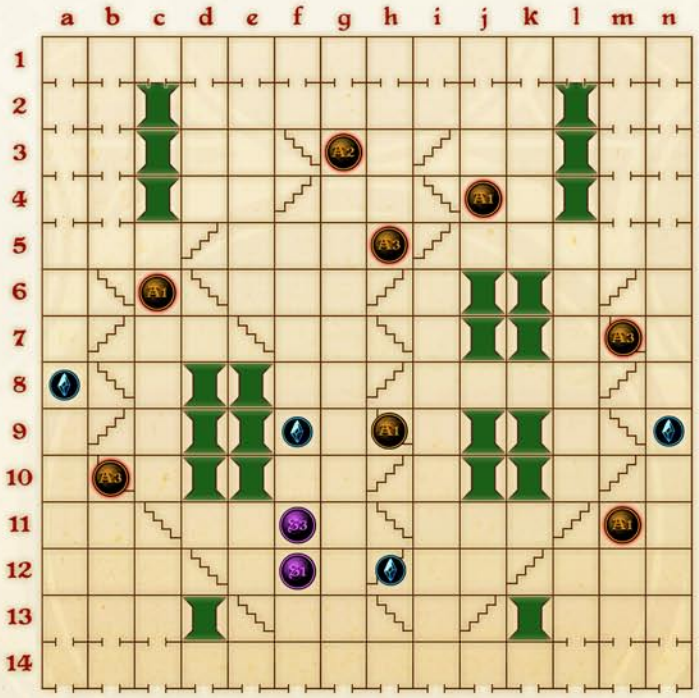
When the Hades Gate at k7 is destroyed, then mass your troops for one huge assault on the remaining Runes to the south. Send Morning Star and groups of Fairies down from the north while you send Demons down the staircase at column j to attack from the east. You should have no trouble steamrolling the remaining enemy forces, especially if you've had time to make a second Morning Star and lots of Demons.

Loop Two, Day Five



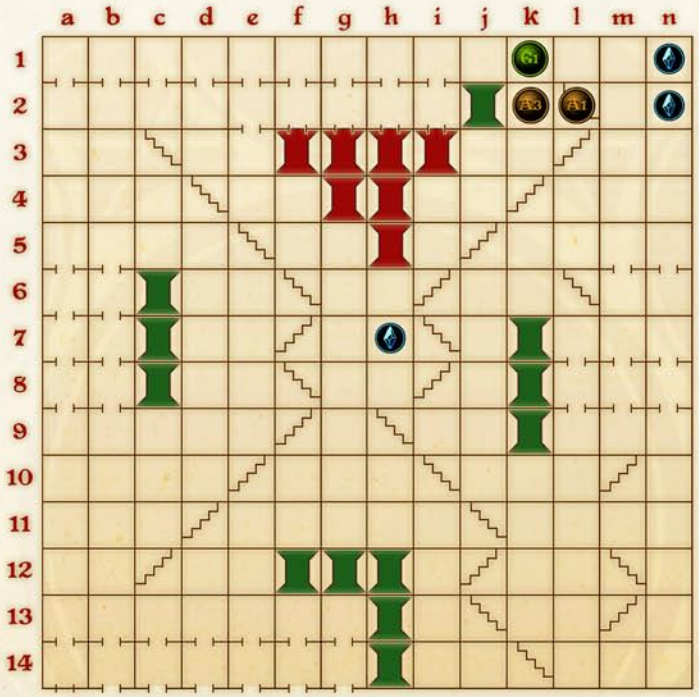
This fight calls for no particular strategy, just level up your Runes and make Dragons as fast as you can. Make sure you support your Dragons properly with units like Grimalkin, Elves, and Fairies. Fairies can help pick off attackers going after the Dragon, Grimalkin can neutralize enemy magic users and Dragons, and Elves can heal. Go after the Hell Gate at i12 first, then send a Fairy over to turn Hiram's allied units into friendly ones you can control. Level up the Necromancy Runes and start supporting your Dragons with Berserking Phantoms, while Ghosts gather more mana. Then just start sending your Dragons and their followers up to lay waste to the many Runes waiting for you on the top half of the map. Try to focus your assaults on a single point at once for maximum effect, and leave Dragons behind to guard your Runes from enemy attackers. Keep a close eye on enemy Golems in this battle, since their artillery fire can devastate a Dragon quickly.

Loop Three, Day One



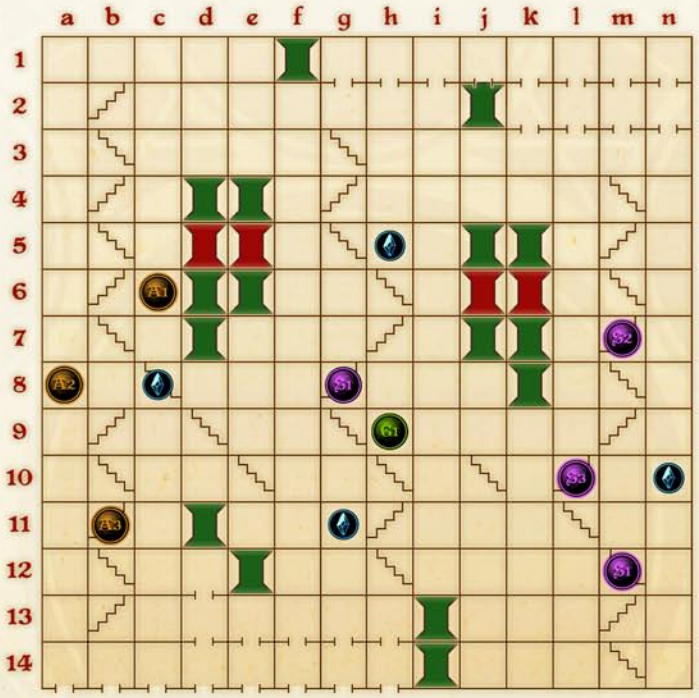
Put your blobs to work gathering mana at g9 and have your Golems defend the stairwell area. If your Golems ever have trouble holding the defensive line at the stairwell, have your Imps advent Guardians to help them out. Build a Chaos Nest, put your Imps to work gathering mana at h12, and then level up all of your Sorcery Runes to their maximums. Create a group of five Demons and send them toward the enemy Runes in column m, with a few Grimalkin in tow. With their damage advantage, the Demons will make short work of the Alchemy enemies. Use the Grimalkin to put the Golems in the area to sleep so you can deal with them more easily. Send another group of Demons and Grimalkin off to do the same thing to the enemy Runes clustered around column b. Don't let any of your troops advance toward the final group of Runes at the top of the screen yet. While the Demons are mauling everything, create a Dragon and a few Grimalkin. When the Dragon is ready, send it toward the Chimera Spawn at g3. Send a few Grimalkin with it, to put the Chimera to sleep. Once the Chimera is to sleep, have your Demons advance and swarm the Chimera while your Dragon lays waste to everything in the area. You should be able to clear out all three Runes easily once the Chimera is down.

Loop Three, Day Two



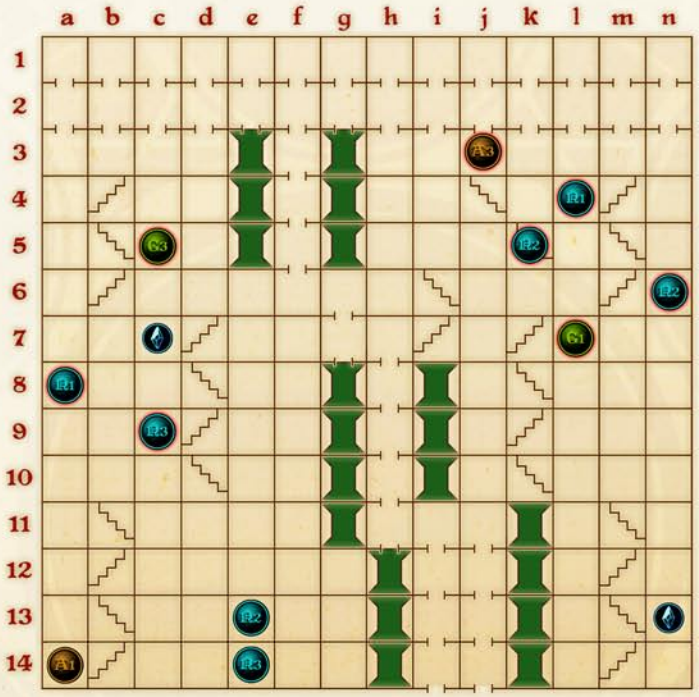
Your first goal is to make some Fairies and advent some Gargoyles to protect your Runes while you generate troops. Imps especially will swarm up the staircases toward you. Level up your Laboratory and Fairy Ring Runes, then generate some Homonculus and Fairies to help fight off enemies on the stairs. Then build a Wicca Rune and start generating groups of Unicorns, then a Titania Rune so you can begin generating Morning Stars. Send your attackers out in groups, so if a Grimalkin puts somone to sleep, others can pick it off quickly. Use Homonculus to thin out thick groups of enemies, and Morning Stars to tear apart Guardians. If you uncover Dragon Eggs, dogpile them immediately. If you find yourself dealing with Dragons or Demons, use the Homonculus's Psychic Storm to weaken them. Enemies are scattered all over the room, so proceed cautiously. Don't forget to use your Fairy's Astral Form ability to help her defense.

Loop Three, Day Three



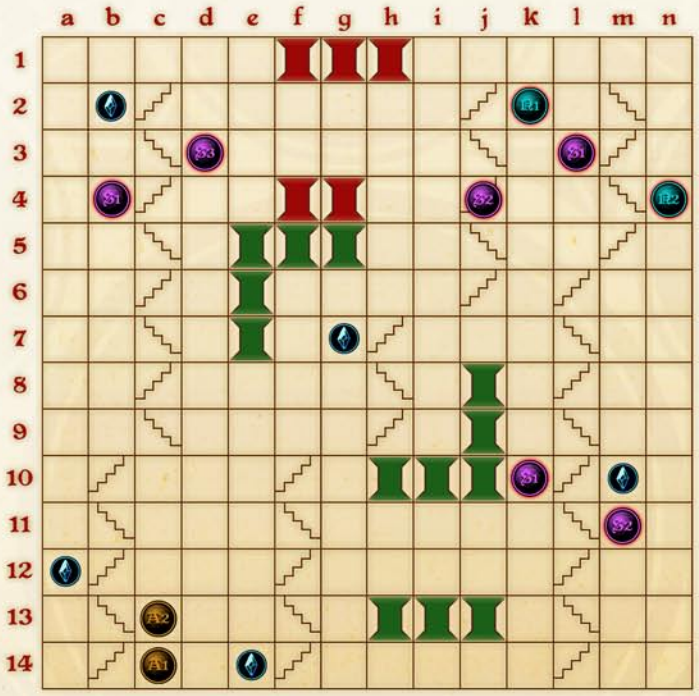
There are a lot of different ways to approach this battle, but mostly you want to make sure you focus on defending your Runes and Crystals first. You need to make sure an enemy attack doesn't cut off your flow of Mana, since you'll be creating a lot of expensive units and Runes. Build a Chaos Nest and keep a Grimalkin around to put large enemies to sleep, and maybe spawn a Dragon to keep an eye on your "base". Advent more Guardians and Talismans if you need to. There are a variety of good attackers you can build, but be sure to use Demons to wipe out Bartido's side of the map. Then you can mop up Advocat with whatever's handy. Titania's Morning Star performs well in this level, as do Unicorns.

Loop Three, Day Four



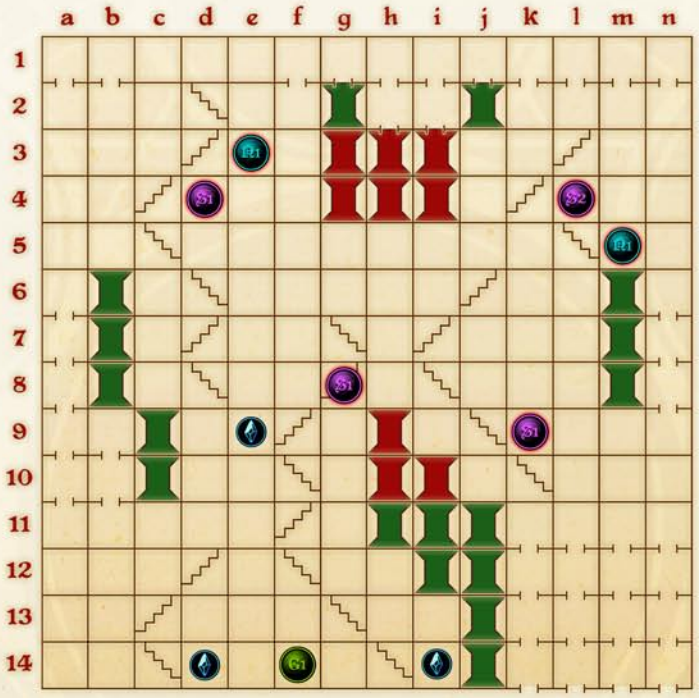
Don't let that giant rift in the middle of the stage frighten you out of using ground-bound units. You can create Charons with your Acheron rune, and they'll carry walking units anywhere you like. Golems and Homonculus are the obvious way to do damage, but both are very vulnerable to enemies that can get inside their attacking range quickly, like Fairies. Keep an escort of some other kind of attacking unit with them to take care of any enemy that gets too close. You start with a Purgatory you can use to make Skullmages, or you can whip up a Fairy Ring and make some Fairies of your own. When you cross the rift, build Runes near the Crystal at n13, so you generate attackers there instead of needing Charon to carry every new group of units over.

Loop Three, Day Five



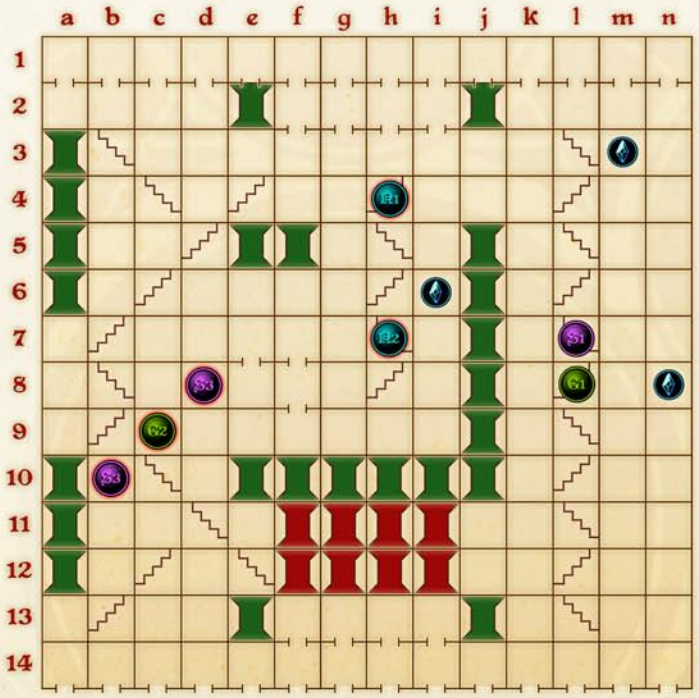
Since you can only generate Alchemy Runes in this battle, you need to be very careful in defending your territory. Keep a Chimera, some Homonculus, and at least five Golems in your base area at all times. Fortify the areas around your Runes with Gargoyles. The devils won't hesitate to attack you, so you probably won't be able to think of going on the offensive. If you do, try to eliminate Runes near your base to slow down the stream of attacks. Don't take your eyes from your base for too long, no matter what. Just one lapse can lead to you losing a valuable Rune or Crystal, or being caught flat-footed when a Dragon shows up.

Loop Four, Day One



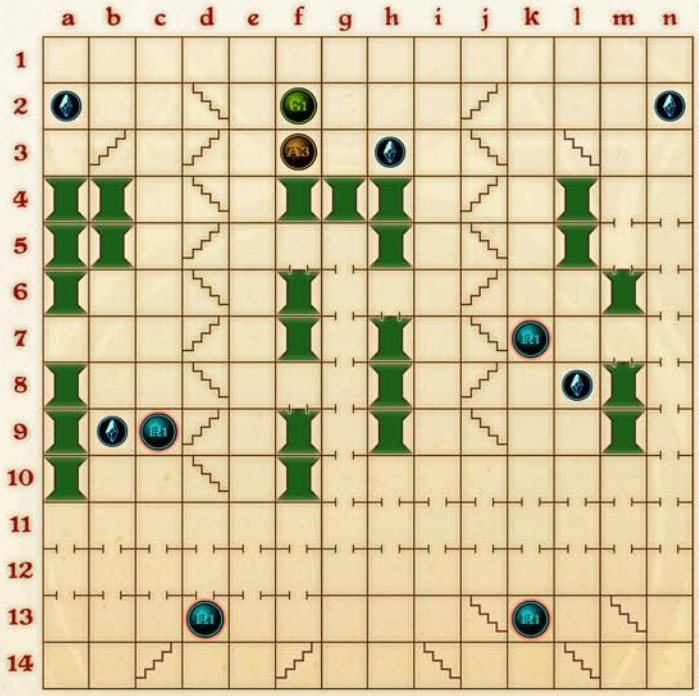
Have your Elves harvest the Crystal at d14. Build a Hades Gate at g14, and make Ghosts to harvest the Crystal at i14. Level both Runes up all the way, so you can make super-powerful Fairies and Phantoms. The Phantoms alone can wipe out most of the enemies and Runes on the map easily, and Fairies in Astral Form are nearly immune to damage from Sorcery creatures. Even Advocat's Dragon can't stand up to the kind of punishment you can dish out with these units.

Loop Four, Day Two



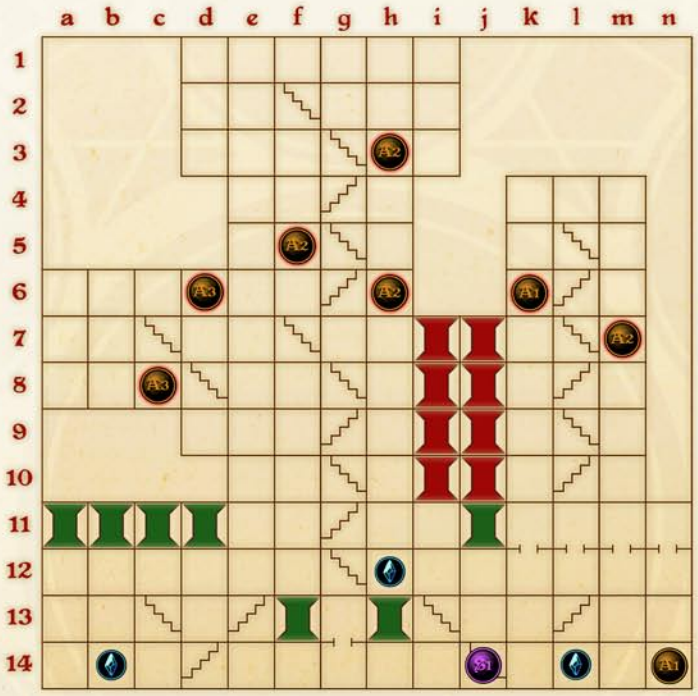
First have your Elves start gathering mana at the crystal at n8. Level your Fairy Ring and Hell Gate up to max, and then make about three Demons. Send your Fairies and the Demons up to clear out the Guardians above your base area. One's at k4, and the other is near the Crystal at m3. When you attack the Guardian at k4, Phantoms and Skullmages swarm in at you, but your Demons can make short work of them. Once the two Guardians are taken out, have your Imp start harvesting the m3 Crystal. Build a Chimera Spawn and level it up to max, and make more Demons. Send a group of roughly four or five Demons to take out the Runes at h4 and h7. Then send a Chimera with an escort of Fairies to attack the Morning Stars waiting around the Titania rune at c9. Have him break down the red barrier columns, and you can send an Elf and some Demons to support him. Send reinforcements as necessary and victory is yours.

Loop Four, Day Three



First, start your Elves and Blobs on gathering mana. Next, level up your Laboratory and generate some Homonculus to protect your base. Psychic Storm can take out a thick swarm of attackers easily. Level up your Fairy Ring to maximum, and build a Titania. Generate groups of Fairies as soon as you can, and work on leveling your Titania up to maximum. Once you can generate groups of around five Fairies, send them toward the Hades Gate at c9. When that area is clear, send your Fairies and a Morning Star to clean out the right hand of the screen. Try to take out Charons before they can unload their cargo. Once the top half of the screen is cleared, then head down to take out first the Rune at k13, and then the one at d13. Make more Fairies and Morning Stars as you need them.

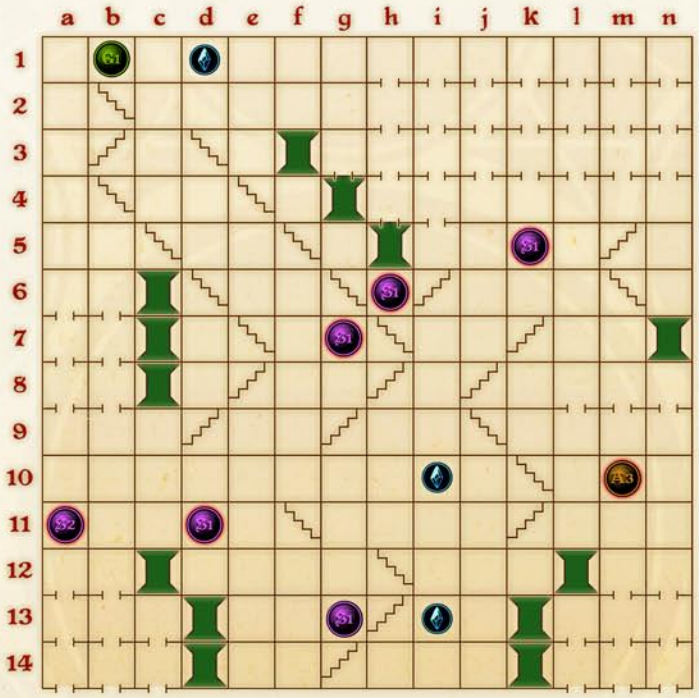
Loop Four, Day Four



You'd think Demons would be the win button in a fight against Alchemy creatures, but you actually need to create a Hades Gate and create Phantoms. Spend the first part of the fight just gathering mana, leveling up your Runes, and eventually creating some Phantoms and Homonculus. Keep your Homonculi near your Phantoms when they go out to fight enemies or take out Guardians. They're all but immune to damage from the Gargoyles and Golems, but an enemy Homonculus can kill them in the blink of an eye. The only real way to prevent this is to have your own Homonculus nearby and ready to use Psychic Storm first.

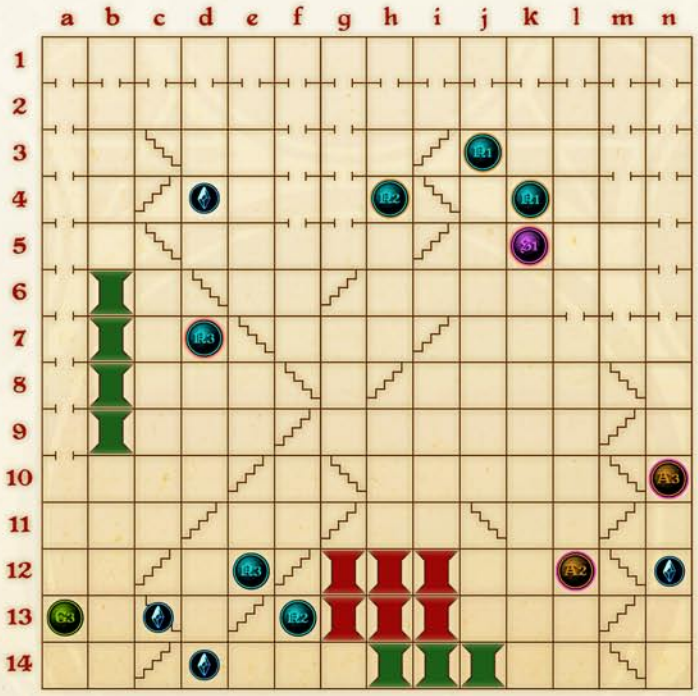
As your Phantoms clear the way, have your Blobs follow behind and Advent your own Gargoyles. Enemy Blobs try to recreate enemy Gargoyles after you destroy them, but creating your own Gargoyles makes this effectively impossible. Once your base camp isn't in immediate danger and you have mana to spare, create an Acheron Rune and a Charon. Use him to ferry some Phantoms to the Chimera Spawn at m7. If you don't destory the Chimera Spawn, you'll have Chimeras attacking your base camp through the entire battle. Once the Chimera Spawn is destroyed, you should be able to survive the allotted thirty minites with no trouble. Use your Charon to quickly ferry Phantoms and Homonculus to areas where they're needed and see if you can destroy all of the enemy Runes.

Loop Four, Day Five



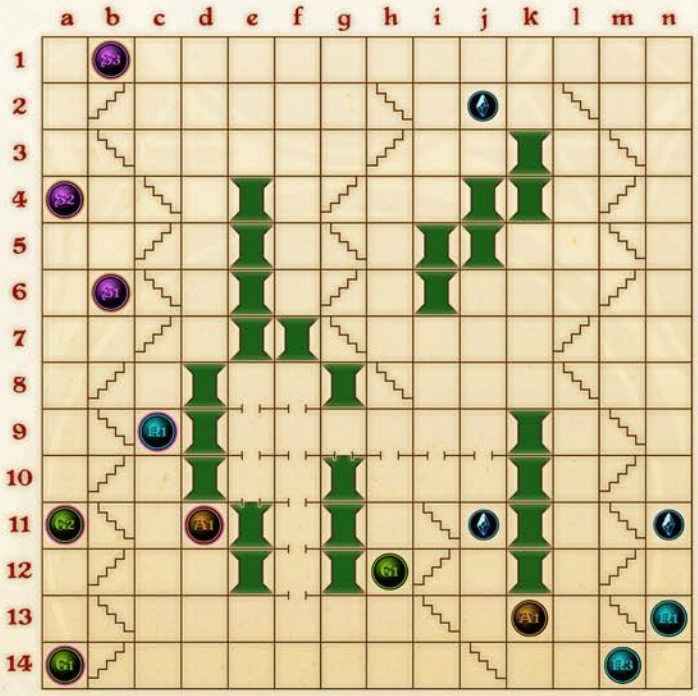
Create a Chaos Nest in your area to the south, and start manufacturing Dragons as fast as you can. In your area at the top of the map, manufacture powerful Necromancy or Glamour creatures. Level your Fairy Ring all the way up, so you can generate Fairies. Send a group of six or seven Fairies down to the Chaos Nest at a11 and try to destroy it before it can spawn a Dragon. If it does spawn one, you'll need a group of Phantoms or Skullmages to defeat it. Once the Chaos Nest is down then just work through the rest of the enemies as quickly as you can. Always keep one Dragon around your Hell Gate, but let any others you have rampage over the map.

Loop Five, Day One



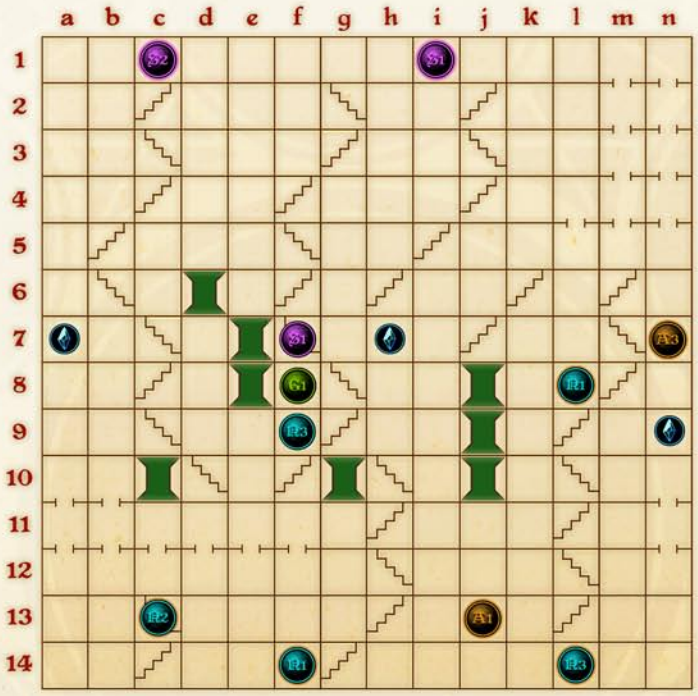
Don't worry about Chartreuse's creatures clustered to the right of you. Just focus on leveling up the Runes you start with and making a Titania, so you can manufacture Morning Stars. Use Unicorns to defend your base, or Phantoms if you feel like making a Hades Gate to buff them up. When you have a Morning Star ready to fight, send her up toward Opalneria's Runes starting with the Rune at d7. Send a Charon with a boat loaded with Skullmages to support her. When her hit points run low, have her reutrn to the Elves and build a Fairy Ring so they can heal her. As long as you can have fresh Morning Stars to replace exhaulsted ones and keep up a flow of mana to pay for starchild bullets, you'll clear this battle easily. Chartreuse may even help you by having his forces surge up to attack Opalneria's creatures on their own.

Loop Five, Day Two



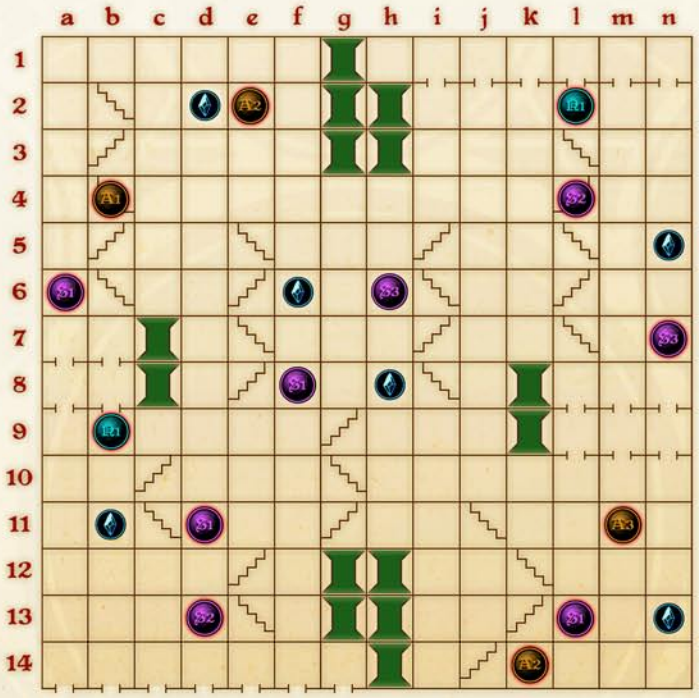
Gammel's forces are unfriendly and will attack yours, so try to avoid his half of the map. Be very careful about where you move your troops. Actually beating Advocat's forces isn't too difficult. Groups of Phantoms and Golems working together can wipe out most of his Runes, and you can send along some Homonculus to help keep troops from being overwhelmed. The Dragon waiting for you by the Chaos Nest at a4 can be difficult if you approach it incorrectly. To take out these Runes, first wipe out every enemy on the right hand side of the map, and move your troops up to row 1 there. Then descend on Advocat's troops from above, using the Golems and Homonculus to lay down cover fire for your Phantoms. Pick off Guardians one by one after luring out the Demons and Imps in the area. As long as you leave plenty of Skullmages and Fairies behind to defend the Runes at your base area, you should win easily.

Loop Five, Day Three



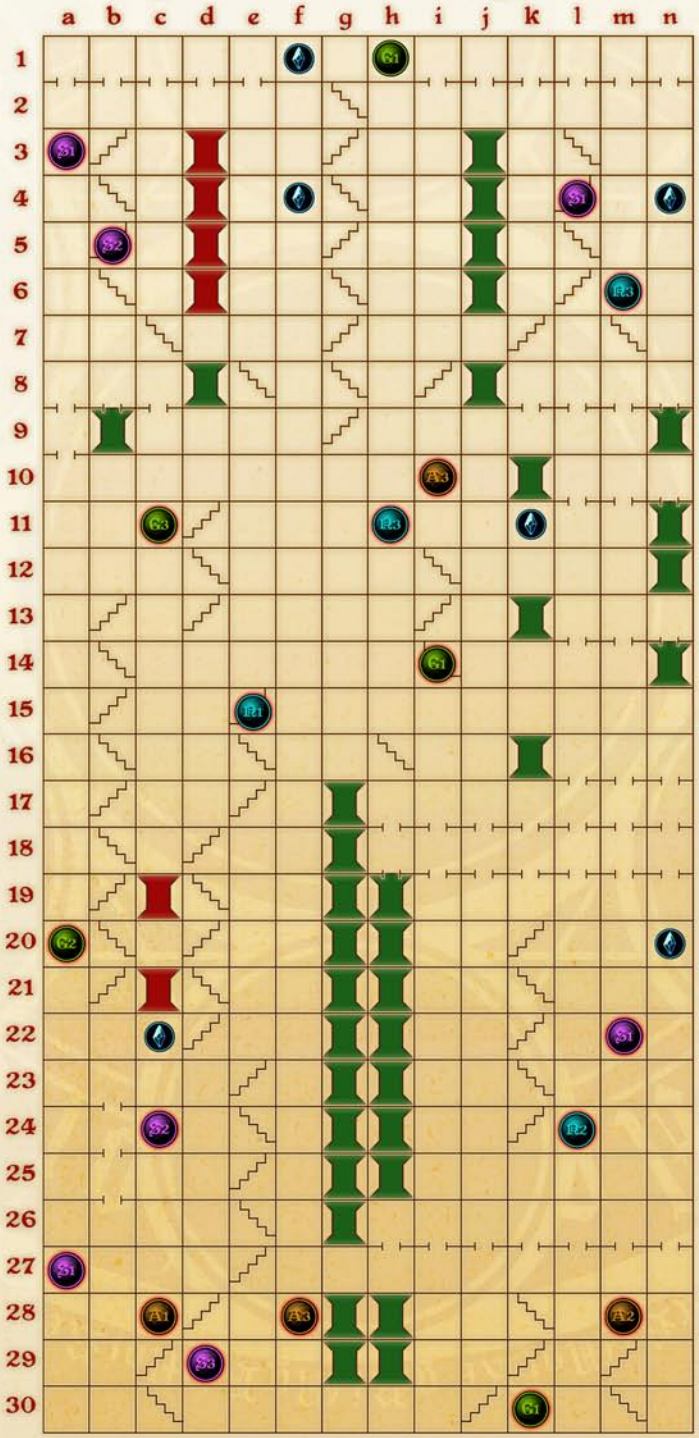
Don't mind Surely when he says that killing one of Margarita's creatures will kill her. Leave them alone unless they're attacking you, but don't hesitate to crush them if they do. Beyond that, just level up your Hell Gate and Titania. Make lots of Demons, and send them on a rampage across Opalneria's territory with your Morning Stars in tow. Start with the Engraver Rune at n7, then work your way down and to the left. Reinforce your Demons as necessary and keep your Morning Stars charged up with starchild bullets. Be sure to leave a few Demons around to defend your base, since the Charons that hang around c13 like to carry boatloads of enemies right into your Runes.

Loop Five, Day Four



First level up your Gehenna and Hell Gate Runes. Have one Imp start building Guardians at all of the staircases near your Runes, and the others gather mana. Create some Demons to help protect your area, but not too many. Finally, build a Chaos Nest, level it up, and start making Dragons and a few Grimalkin to support them. Your emphasis should be on creating as many Dragons as you can, since they're powerful enough to take out dozens of enemies each. Don't let any of your units get too far afield unless you've got the advantage over the units there. Units that decide to run off and attack swarms of enemies themselves are likely to get killed if there are no Dragons nearby to protect them.

Loop Five, Day Five



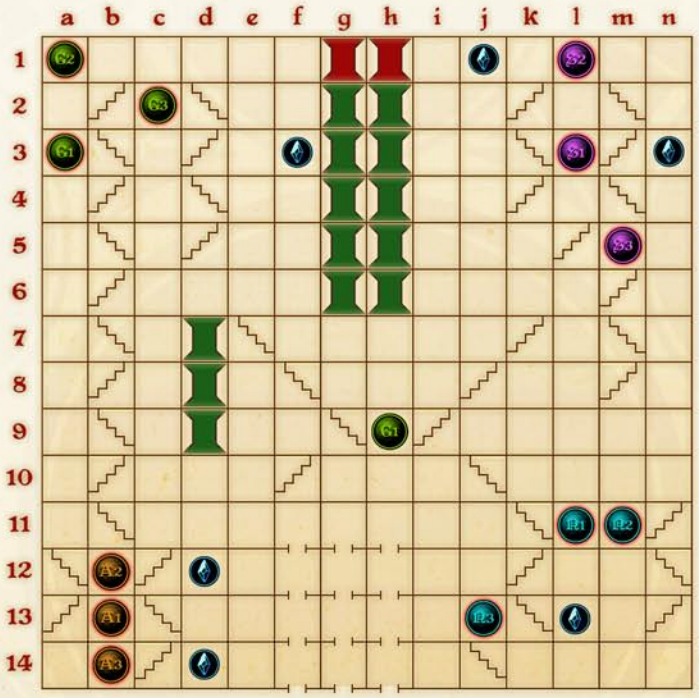
Loop Five, Day Five

This thirty-row monstrosity may look intimidating, but it's actually pretty fun. It's only tense for the first ten minutes or so, when you're trying to build up a decent base camp around your starting Rune at h1. Build a Wicca, a Purgatory, and a Hades Gate right off the bat. Level them all up to max, and spare some Ghosts and Elves to create Obelisks and Talismans around the stairway that leads right into your base area. Create some Fairies and Phantoms to stand guard around your camp. Then, send parties of all your strongest attackers to clean out the area around the Chaos Nest at b5. There's a Dragon waiting for you there, so fight carefully. Repeat the process to clear out the similar area on the right. Once you do this, you can build a second base area around the Crystal at n4. Create Sorcery and Alchemy Runes there, so you can start spawning those types of creatures.

Once you've secured your main base by clearing out the enemy Runes around it, this level turns into a free-for-all. Just work your way steadily down the map, sending squads of creatures that take advantage of enemy weaknesses. When creatures weaken, send them back to a safe area to be healed by an Elf or Obelisk instead of letting them get killed. For taking out the very bottom quarter of the map, build an Acheron or two and use Charons to ferry boats full of powerful attackers swiftly down to the front lines. By the time this battle is over, you'll have fought every single type of creature in the game in a single battle, probably using every single type of creature. The longer you survive, the more force you have to throw at the enemy. Once you've cleared about half the map victory is just a matter of chipping away at the remaining forces.

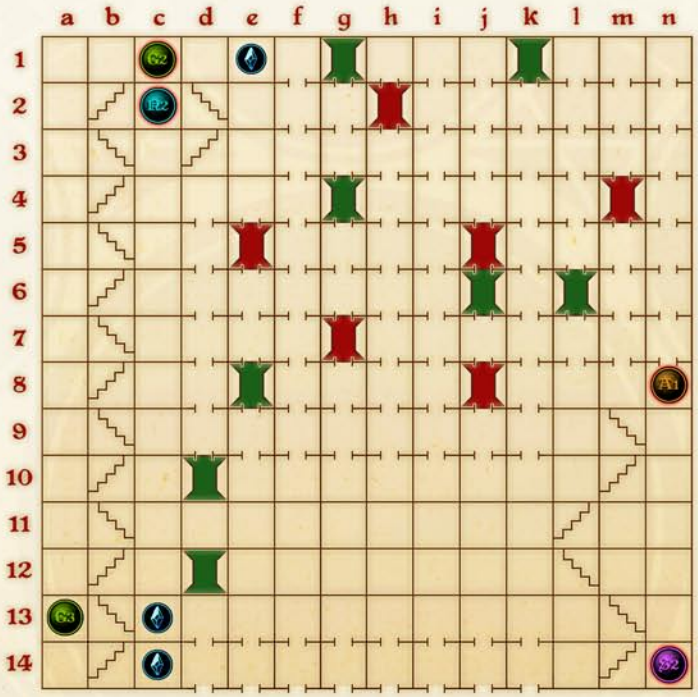


Trial Map 1



This is sort of a super-easy version of the last story battle. You begin with no nearby Crystal to mine, but 5000 mana to spend. Use it to create a Wicca and a Titania near your Fairy Ring, and level all three Runes to maximum. Have your Elves erect Talismans around them to protect you from attackers. Create five Fairies, five Unicorns, and two or three Morning Stars. Descend to take out the Necromancy enemies at the bottom right corner of the map. Build a Hell Gate near the Crystal at, and create some Imps to mine it. Meanwhile, send your Glamour troops up to take out the Sorcery enemies at the upper right and the Glamour enemies at the upper left. While your Glamour troops rampage, level up your Hell Gate, make a group of Demons, and build a Chaos Nest so you can make a Grimalkin. You may also want to invest in a Gehenna to power up your Demons. Send your Demons into the area of Alchemy troops at the bottom left of the map. Your Demons should make very short work of them, especially if your Grimalkin puts the Chimera waiting in the area to sleep.

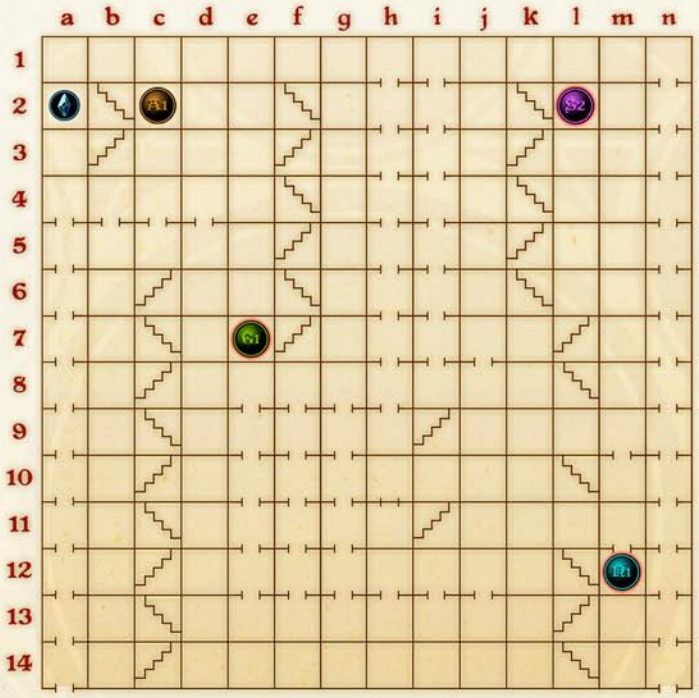
Trial Map 2



You can only make Wicca Runes in this level, which means your only unit is going to be Unicorns. Set the Elves you start with to gathering mana while you level up your Wicca. Have two Elves build some Talismans on the stairway leading down to your Rune, to prevent enemies from wandering into your camp. When your Wicca is fully leveled, make some more Unicorns and then send the whole group down row 11, so you can get at the Laboratory and Chaos Nest on the right side of the screen. When the Guardians and Gargoyles begin firing at your Unicorns, have them use their Barrier abilities. Let them destroy the Gargoyles, and then send them after the Grimalkin lurking around the Chaos Nest. They'll destroy the Rune automatically after destroying its defender. Repeat the process with the Laboratory and the Homonculus nearby.

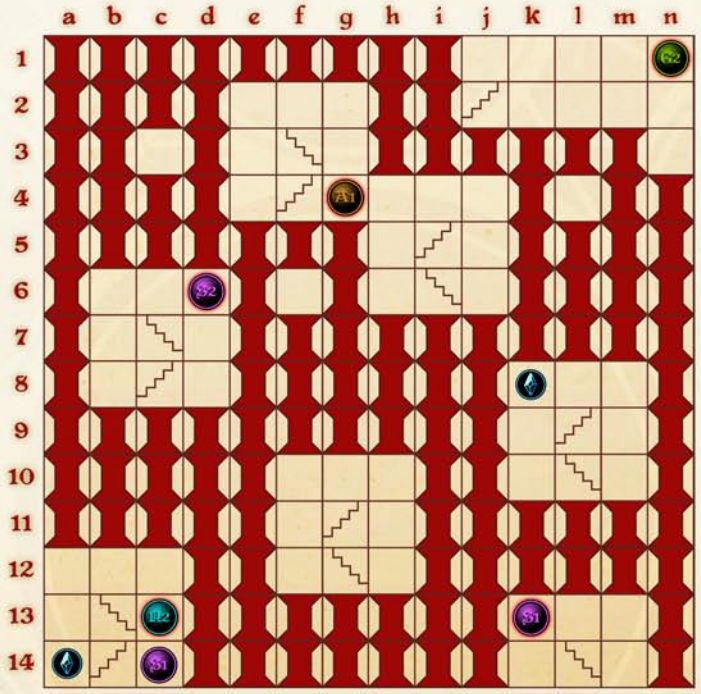
Next, make a fresh group of Unicorns and send them up the stairs. If you've fully leveled your Wicca, they'll have the Astral Hold ability. Use that to paralyze the two Charons there while the rest of your Unicorns take out the Morning Stars. You can easily withstand her attacks if they put their Barriers up. Then quickly try to destroy the Titania and Acheron Runes before the Charons start moving again. These Charons are fully leveled up, so they'll use their Anima Drain ability to demolish your Unicorns if they're not kept immobile with Astral Hold.

Trial Map 3



The strategy for this level is fairly obvious, but executing it is difficult. You can only make Laboratories, so the two Golems you start with are your only way to damage the Runes and Gargoyles on the level. Set one of your Blobs to gathering mana, and fully level up your Laboratory. Next, make groups of Blobs and Homonculus. Send Blobs ahead of your other units to scout out new areas. If they run across enemies, they'll automatically use their Gum Drop ability to slow them down. Send in other Blobs as necessary to keep the enemies pinned down, and then send in Homonculus to use Psychic Storm on them. When you find a Gargoyle, just let your Golems attack it freely. His range is longer than the Gargoyle's, so the only danger will be any reinforcements that show up. Keep your Blobs and Homonculus clustered near your Golem when it's assaulting a Rune or Gargoyle, so you can deal with any reinforcements that show up after the attack starts. If you lose one Golem, you can finish the level, but your progress slows down tremendously.

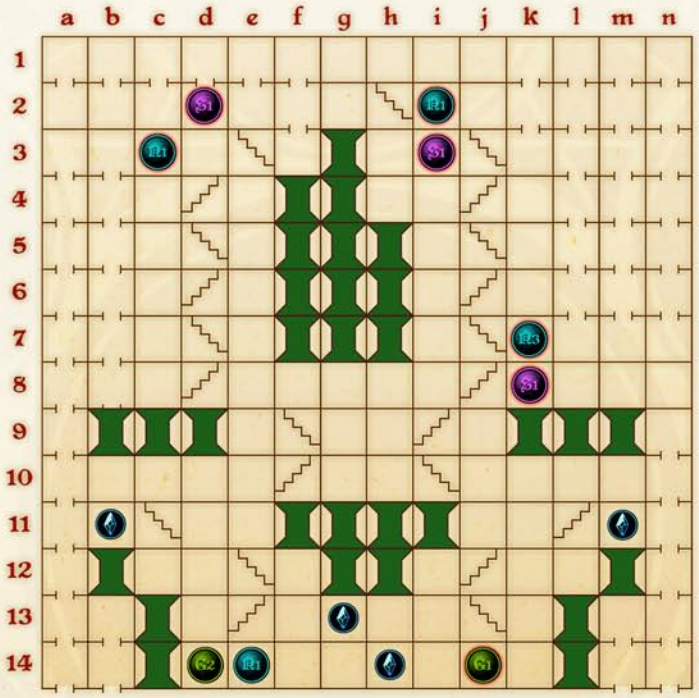
Trial Map 4



This stage is about puzzle solving. Max your Acheron so you unlock Anima Drain. Send Charon toward the Chaos Nest at d6. Zap the enemies in the area, but don't go after the Rune. Go back to your base area and get the Demons waiting there. Unload them next to the Chaos Nest. They'll destroy it and any Dragon Eggs it spawns. Load more Imps onto Charon, and head toward the Laboratory at g4. Repeat the process you used to destroy the Chaos Next before. Go back to your base and fill Charon's boat up with Demons, then make sure the Hell Gate's level is maxed out. Send Charon toward the Hell Gate at k13. Unload your Demons just inside the walls. Ideally, the Guardians and Demons in the room focus their attacks on your Demons after they start attacking.

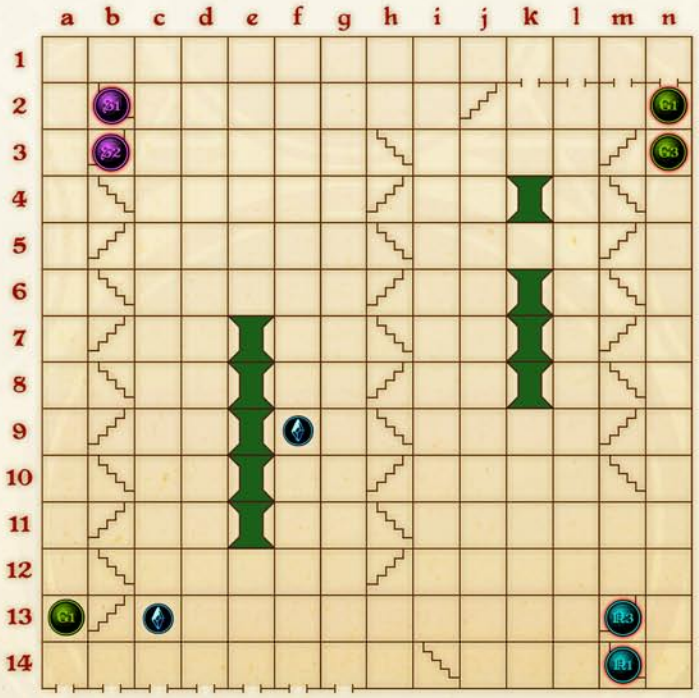
Your Demons should be able to clear the room out quickly. Send Charon back to the room at g4 to pick up the Imps you left there. Once you have them, have Charon carefully approach the empty chamber at l4 from below. That room contains a Guardian. Use Anima Drain to kill it. This is important because it will attract the two Unicorns waiting in the chamber above. They can't reach your Charon, but they'll stand on the tiles right above him. Leave Charon there to hold their attention. Make a second Charon, and give him a full complement of Demons. Have him approach j1 and unload his Demons just inside that tile. Since the Unicorns are drawn away, they won't notice (or Astral Hold) your second Charon. Your Demons will immediately attack the Morning Star and keep her attention. Draw your second Charon safely into the columns and watch the carnage unfold.

Trial Map 5



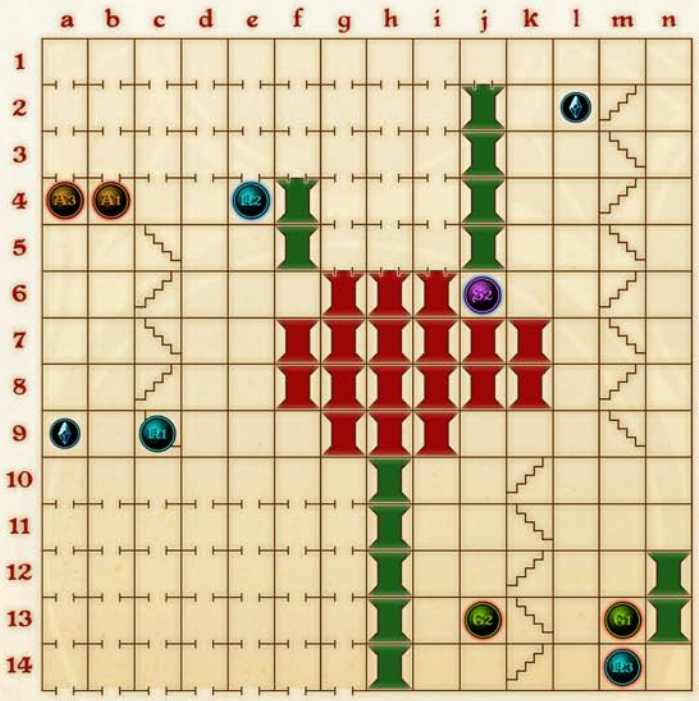
Your options are limited here, since you can only use Phantoms, Fairies, Ghosts, and Elves, and you can't level your Runes up all the way. For the most part, just focus on manufacturing Phantoms and Fairies quickly after your Runes are leveled up. Take out the Purgatory at k7 as your first priority, using Phantoms and Fairies together. Then focus on sending Fairies up toward the Runes that remain on the right of the central group of columns, and Phantoms up toward the Runes on the left.

Trial Map 6



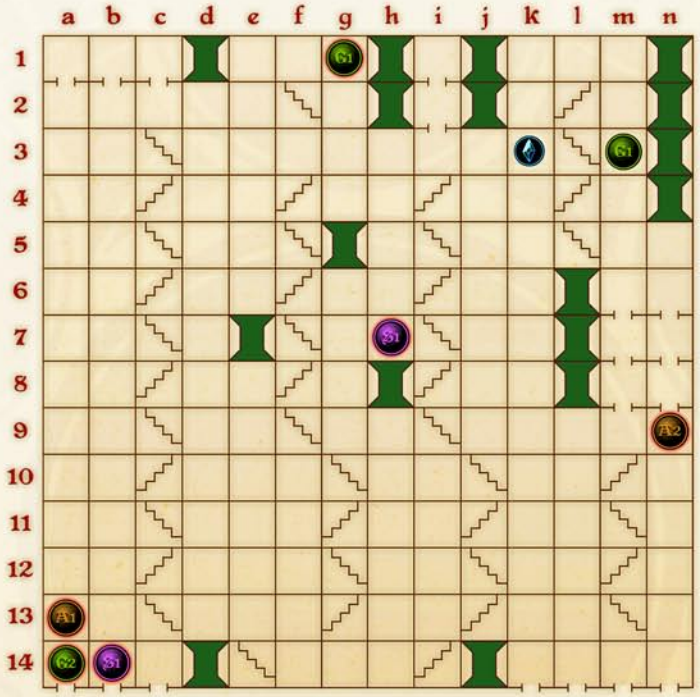
After you start gathering Mana, create a mess of Fairies and level your Fairy Ring up to at least level four. Have some stay behind to guard your camp, and send around eight up to attack the Talisman to the north of your camp. Use Astral Form and try to use your Fairies to wipe out the Sorcery Runes at b2 and b3 before the nine minute mark. At that point, a Dragon that's hard to handle spawns. Send your surviving Fairies and fresh reinforcements across the map to wipe out the Necromancy Runes at m13 and m14. Finally, send Fairies up to crush the Glamour Runes at n2 and n3. If you can afford to make a Titania and Morning Stars in this level, it makes for much easier going, but don't invest in them until after you've completely mined out the first Crystal.

Trial Map 7



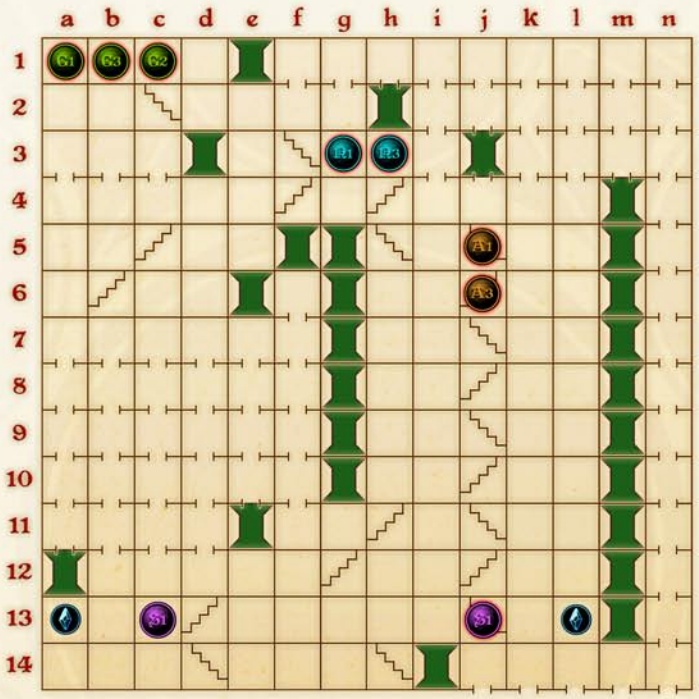
Create a Purgatory Rune to go with the Hades Gate you start with. Level them both up to max, and begin creating Phantoms. Send groups of Berserk Phantoms up to swiftly pick off the Gargoyles above your base area while some more Phantoms or Skullmages patrol your base. As you near the Alchemy Runes at a4 and b4, you should encounter some Homonculus and Golems. Pick off the Homonculus first, and then the Golems should go down easily. Take control of the Acheron and level it up to max. Make a Charon and have it take your Phantoms over to the Chaos Nest at j6. Immediately go to work taking out the Guardians and other Sorcery enemies clustered around the Chaos Nest while you level it up. Have Charon send in more Phantom reinforcements as necessary. Once the area is clear, create a couple of Dragons with your Chaos Nest. Don't bother with Grimalkin. Instead, have your Dragons wade down and wipe out all of the Talismans, Guardians, and Obelisks protecting the Glamour Runes and Purgatory around m14. Once all of the Talismans are gone, send in your remaining Phantoms to support them. Even with Fairies and a Morning Star patroling the area, you should dismantle the defenders and remaining Runes very quickly.

Trial Map 8



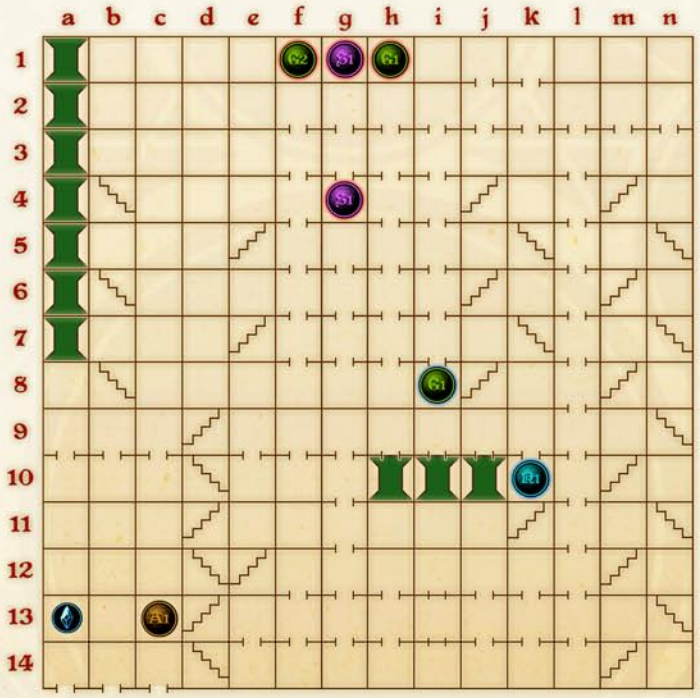
Create a Titania and a Wicca to go with your Fairy Ring, and level them all up to their maximum. Invest in Fairies and Morning Stars first, and use them to wipe out the Sorcery Runes at h7 and Glamour Runes at g1. Then send your Fairies back to base, and send your Morning Stars alone to deal with the Alchemy Runes and Chimera around n9. This may sound dangerous, but your Morning Star is Astral and so won't take significant damage from the creatures there. Return her to your base area. To take out the two enemy Morning Stars lurking at the bottom left corner of the map, just send in a ton of Unicorns, seven or eight if you can afford it. If they all go in with their Barriers up, they'll easily survive the onslaught and tear the enemies there to pieces. Pick off the Talismans there just to be sure, and then watch as your Unicorns wipe out the Runes.

Trial Map 9



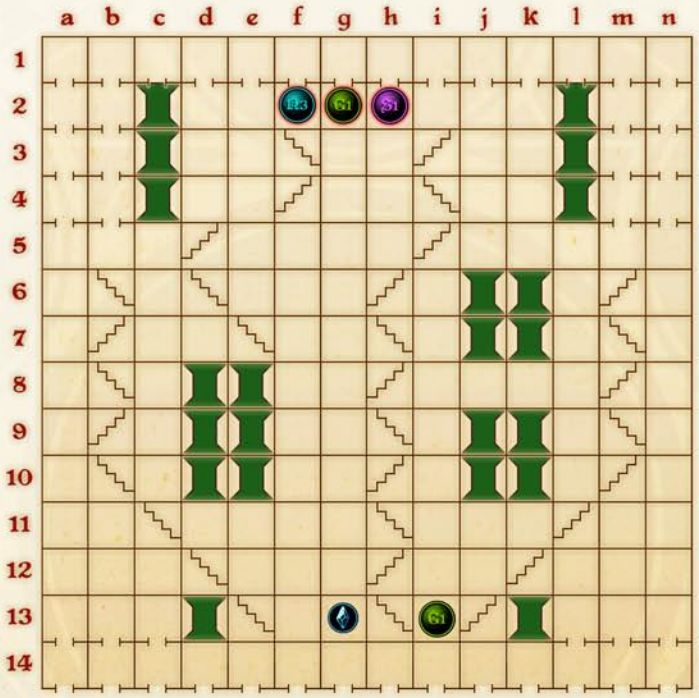
As the stage hint suggests, you want to create a Chaos Nest and a Chimera Spawn to go along with the Fairy Ring you start with. You also want to create a Wicca. Level all of your Runes up to max, then start creating Unicorns, Chimera, and Dragons. Use the Chimera and some Fairies to guard your base while teams of Unicorns and a couple of Dragons stomp up the long spiral staircase at column j, destroying Runes along the way. When they're at the top, send some Chimera up to tear through the Guardians waiting at the top of the pit area above your base. While your Dragons and Unicorns keep the many Morning Stars in the area occupied, have your Chimera buzzsaw through any other Glamour reinforcements that appear. When all the enemies are defeated, tear apart the Glamour Runes waiting around a1.

Trial Map 10



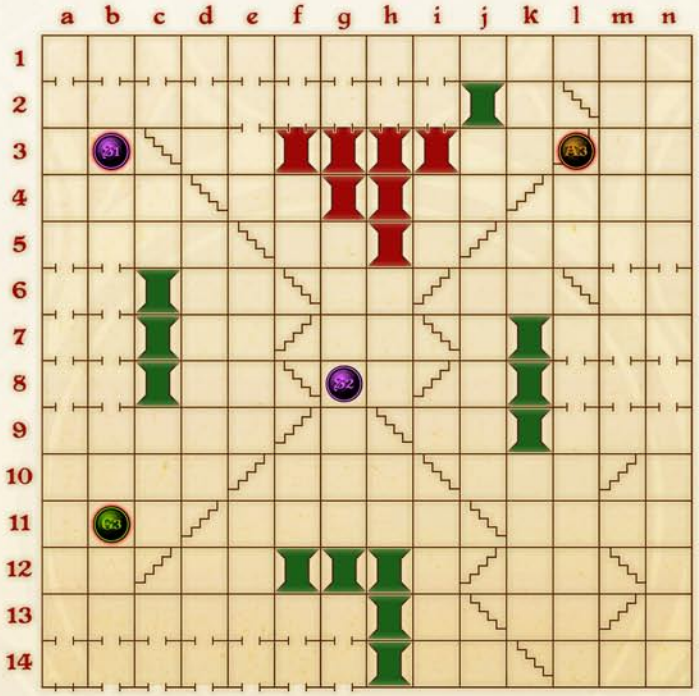
This level is a difficult puzzle. You start with one Elf and no mana. Use the Elf to take control of a pair of ally Phantoms at e11. Send one Phantom to ally with some Golems at a8, while another allies with some Unicorns, Skullmages, and a Wicca Rune at j8. A Demon will appear, but seize upon it with your available units and it should die quickly. Then take out the row of Guardians at row 10. When they're down, your Elf can run over and ally with the Blobs waiting there. Send the Blobs down to harvest the Crystal at a13. When you have about 375 mana, create a Fairy Ring next to the Wicca and level it up once. Create a Fairy, and send her up to ally with a cluster of fairies at c1. Once you make this alliance you've basically won. First send your nine Fairies to eliminate the Chaos Nest at g4, and then head up to g1 to eliminate the Titania, Hell Gate, and enemy Fairy Ring waiting there. You have to do all of this very quickly, within about eight minutes, as very strong attackers spawn roughly every two minutes in this level.

Trial Map 11



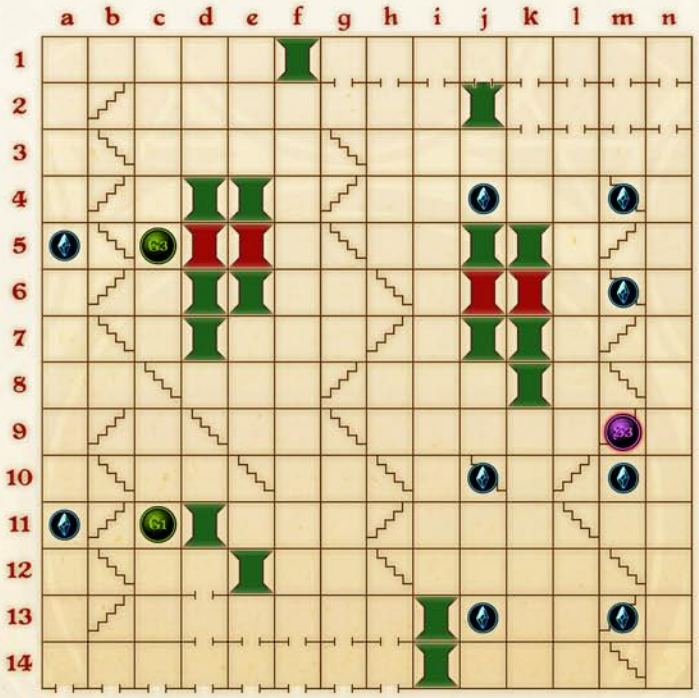
Make an Acheron and a Wicca to go with your Fairy Ring. Level your Acheron up to level two and your Wicca to its maximum. Create one Charon and five Unicorns. Have Charon ferry the Unicorns up through the Gargoyles at either far side of the map or the pillars at columns j and k. Either way, he moves too fast to take much damage. Drop your Unicorns off at the enemy Runes at g2 and make sure they don't wander off and fight other enemies. Make them focus on damaging the Runes and keep their Barriers up to prevent damage. You should win easily.

Trial Map 12



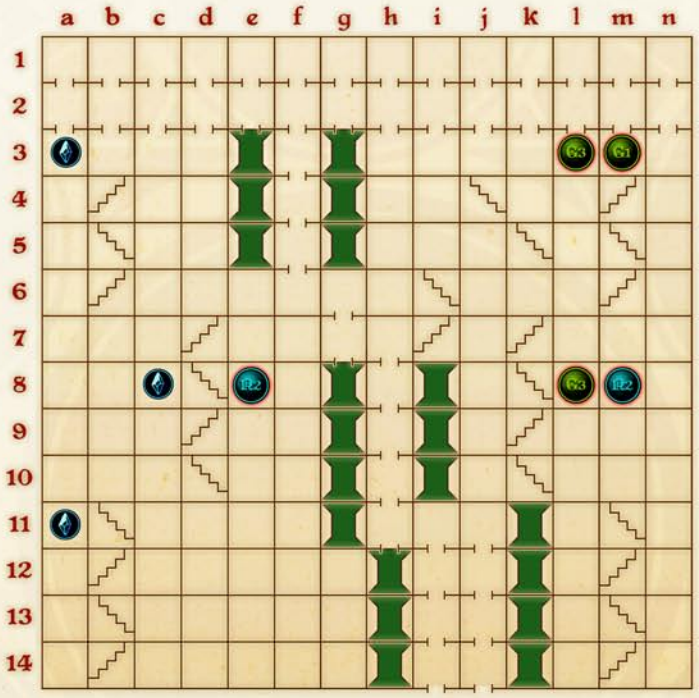
This is a simple exercise in using your many Grimalkin to support your Guardians. Have them Mana Burn approaching Golems and Unicorns for one-shot kills, and put approaching Demons to sleep. Imps do so little damage you can ignore them. Don't let your Grimalkin stray far from your Guardians, and react quickly when new attackers get into range. The last few minutes of this battle are hectic, with attackers approaching from every staircase at once.

Trial Map 13



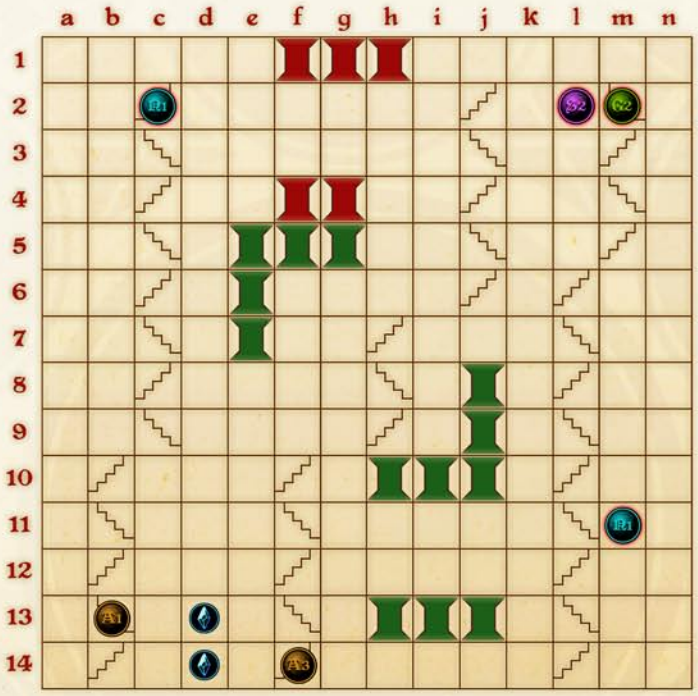
You should remember from the last battle that Golems have a longer firing range than Guardians. So, group your Golems together and send them up toward row 3. Let them start attacking the Guardians there, moving forward slowly. The Guardians can't counter, but attacking Imps can be a problem. Have a squad of Fairies follow your Golems and pick off any enemies that try to attack them. You also want to take out Imps trying to advent new Guardians in the place of old ones, but let your Golems handle this. Once the way is clear, move your Golems and Fairies to n3. Imps will begin rebuilding the Guardians you destroyed in your wake, but ignore them. Instead, head down to take out the two Guardians at m7. Then focus your fire on the Hell Gate. Ignore any Imps around or even the Guardians if they get advented again, and just throw all your firepower at the Rune.

Trial Map 14



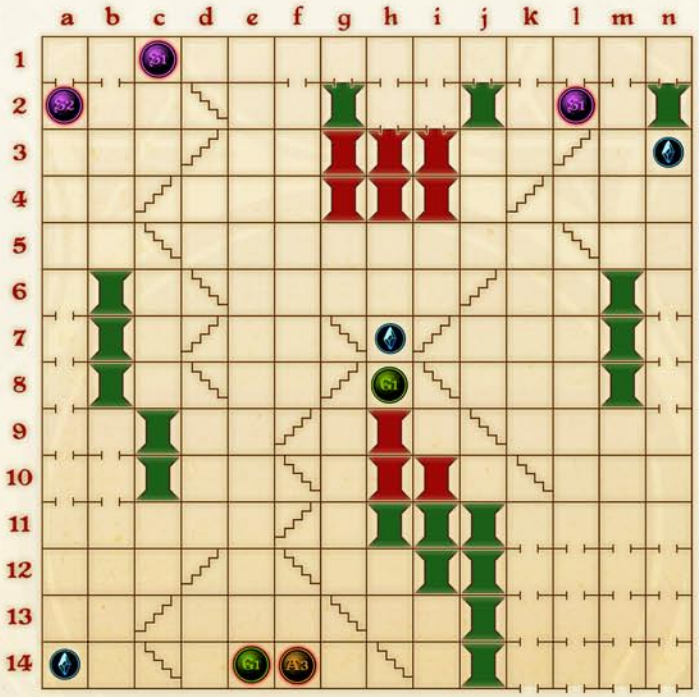
Immediately build a Hell Gate and a Gehenna near your Acheron, and set your Ghosts to gathering mana. Your Guardians can handle defense for now, but invest your mana in leveling up the Hell Gate first. Then manufacture some Demons to protect your base area while you level up the other Runes. Acheron only needs to be leveled up to two, but max out your Gehnna. Your Demons should be able to handle anything the other side throws at you, even an enemy Charon carrying troops. Once the other Runes are finished, make a Charon. Have your Demons board the Netherworld Party Van, and make some more Demons to watch your Runes. Send your Charon down into the pit area, around j12, and then up toward n8 to let your Demons disembark. They'll tear the Runes apart quickly, and then you'll need to have Charon pick them up quickly before they waste their time attacking the Talismans in the area. Move quickly so your Charon takes as little damage as possible, and send him back to n8. Then have him travel up column n to n3, and unload his Demons. Make sure the Demons focus their attacks on the two Runes there instead of the Talismans, and victory is yours.

Trial Map 15



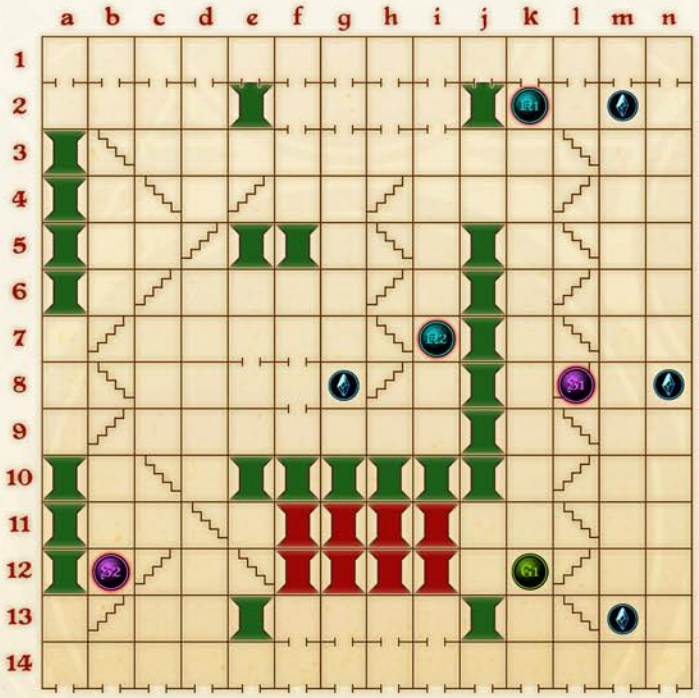
Make a Chimera Spawn to help you for assaulting Runes, and level your other Alchemy Runes to maximum. For defending your base area, you'll rely on Clairvoyance to make it possible for your Gargoyles and Golems to damage Astral enemies like Phantoms and Morning Stars quickly. Always keep a group of Golems around your base area, and rebuild Gargoyles as soon as they're destroyed. For attacking, send out a Chimera along with a group of Golems, and at least one Homonculus. Use the Golems to take out the Guardians that protect the Runes before you attack, and use your Homonculus to Clairvoyance any defenders that appear. Take out the Runes at c2 and m11 first, then head up to take care of the Chaos Nest and Titania around m2.

Trial Map 16



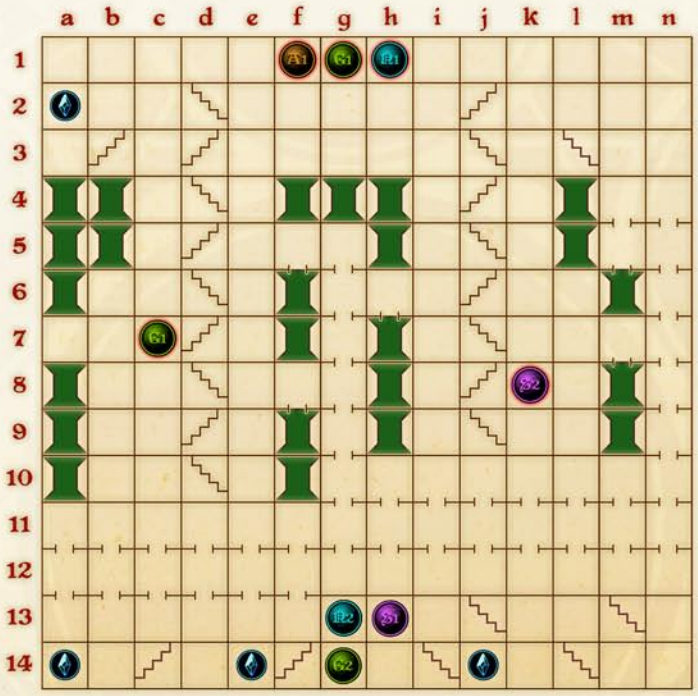
There are a lot of ways to go about finishing this map, but the easiest involves using sneaky Fairies. First, level your Fairy Ring up all the way. Then, send them in groups of eight to the top of the screen. Sneak over to the Sorcery Runes at c1 and a2. If you drop your Fairies from above carefully enough, they'll ream the Runes and the Sorcery enemies there won't be able to do much about it. You want to take out these Runes first since the Chaos Spawns Dragons if you don't. Next, sneak them over to the Hell Gate at l2 and repeat the performance. If your Fairies are in Astral form, they won't take much damage. Taking out the Runes at the bottom of the map is more difficult. If you have enough mana, you can make a Morning Star and simply have her smash through the enemy Fairies there. Then, you can sneak Fairies down to attack the Runes. If they take Astral form, the Golems and Gargoyles won't even try to attack them. If you aren't inclined to be so patient, then you can just have groups attack the Runes directly and weather the Fairies' withering counter-attacks.

Trial Map 17



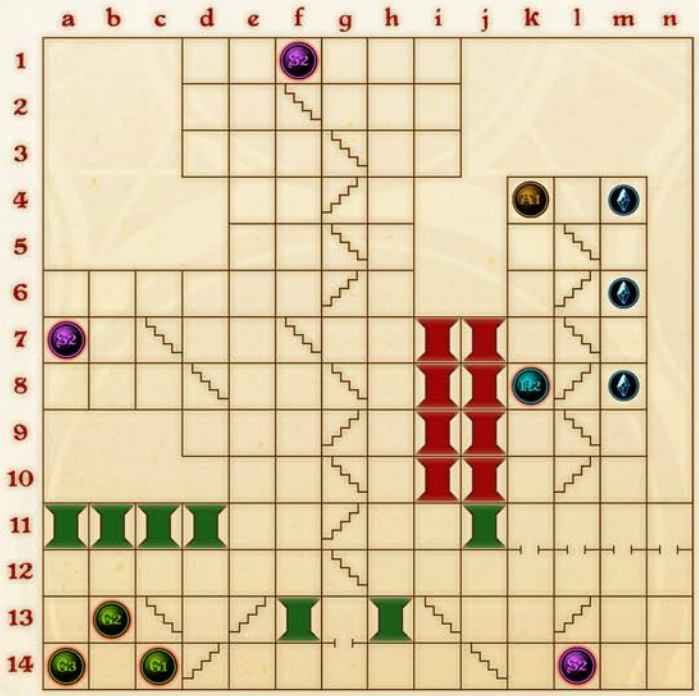
Make a few extra Elves to help you gather mana more quickly, then build a Titania Rune at l13 before you do anything else. Don't level up your Fairy Ring or invest in Fairies just yet. Just level up your Titania and make a Morning Star as soon as possible. She can defend your base area while you build and level up an Engraver. Create Golems to take out the Guardians above you, while the Morning Star protects them. As they move up to finish off the Sorcery Rune at l8, make another Morning Star. Leave the Golems behind to defend your base, and make some Fairies and a third Morning Star to help. Take your first two up to clean out the Necromancy enemies and Hades Gate around k2. As long as you take out the Skullmages first thing, they'll be fine. Send one Morning Star back to base and bring the Golems up to take out the Obelisks and Acheron around n2. This usually draws aggro from an enemy Morning Star, who is effectively invincible if you fight her around Obelisks. Lure her away to dispatch her if you haven't destroyed them all. Finally, mass all your Golems and Morning Stars for an assault on the Chaos Nest at b12.

Trial Map 18



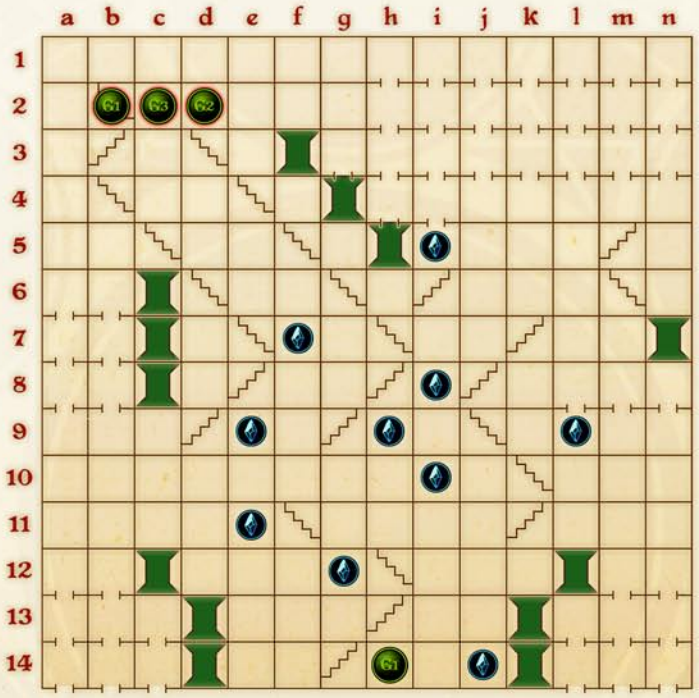
Level up your Titania first, and use a Morning Star purely to guard your Runes. Then construct a Gehenna, and level it and your Hades Gate up completely. Then level your Acheron up to level two. Make a Charon and five Demons, and send them up to e10. Quickly get your Charon out of area while the first group starts wiping out the Glamour enemies there. Even the Morning Star there shouldn't be much of a match for them. Construct an Engraver and level it up completely. Send Charon back to the area with a boatload of Golems, and drop them off around b1. Leave your Demons in the area to take care of mobile enemies, but don't let them engage the Gargolyes clustered around the Runes at g1. Instead, let your Golems work through them slowly and methodically. Have Charon bring up more Golems if you can, for insurance. Once those Runes are destroyed, let your Golems eliminate the rest of the Garoyles in the area and get ready to take out the Chaos Nest at k8. Resistance will be toughest here, so just throw everything you have at the area. Make sure your troops descend into the area via the staircase in column j. So, if you use Charon to ferry Demons over, drop them off around i3 or h6. Drop Golemns off at j2 and let them walk down the staircase to get to an optimum attack range. Focus fire on the Rune at k8, since that can let you win the scenario before the Guardians and Demons in the area can do much damage to your troops.

Trial Map 19



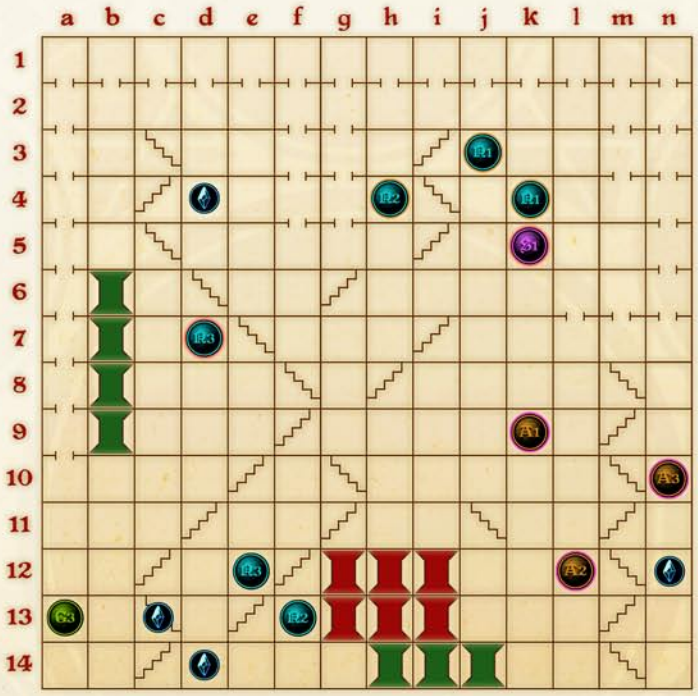
Destroying all of the Runes on this map isn't too likely, but destroying the Chaos Nests at f1 and m14 relatively early in the battle can improve your chances of surviving for thirty minutes significantly. Otherwise this is a basic defense mission, focusing on using Chimeras. It's hard to use support units effectively because the main attackers are Dragons, Morning Stars, and Fairies that can hide in the walls. Keep one Homonculus around to use Clairvoyance, but otherwise don't expect much help from them. Chimeras are expensive, so when your units get wounded, try to replenish their HP by letting them Consume allies. Aside from reducing your score, letting your Chimeras die frequently increases your chances of not being able to finish the mission, due to the time and cost of creating new ones.

Trial Map 20



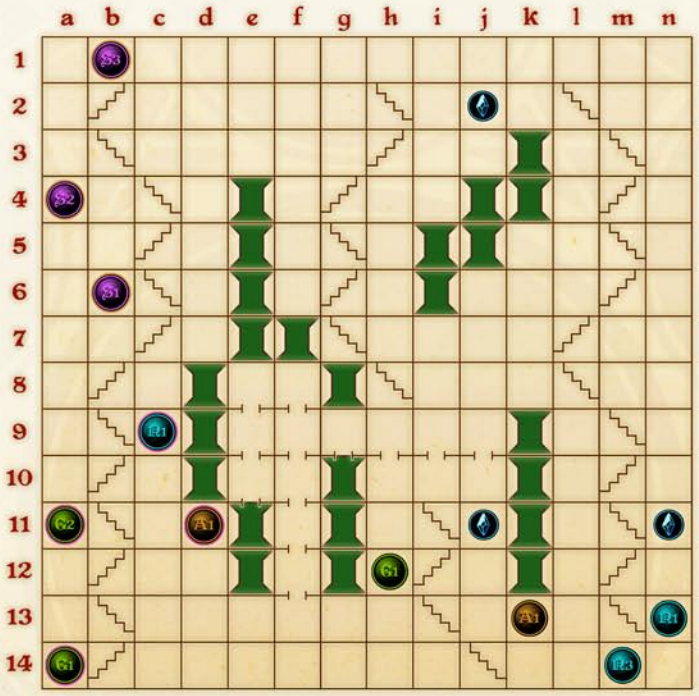
The enemy Fairies that assault your base here are so powerful that they'll tear through your own Fairies. Instead, this level wants you to use a demented tactic to slow down the enemy Fairies. Spawn some extra Elves when the stage begins and send them all over the map, converting all of the Crystals into Sanctuaries. Don't mine them for Mana, just convert them and then leave them alone. Build up a Titania Rune in the meantime, and make a Morning Star as soon as you can. When that's finished, build up an Engraver and spawn a squad of Golems. If you pull off this tactic correctly, the powerful enemies that would otherwise attack your camp slow down to destory all of the Sanctuaries you aren't using. You can pick them off easily with your Golems and Morning Stars as you work your way up toward the enemy Runes around c2. Use your usual tactics to destroy the Talismans and Runes with the Golems, and use your Morning Star to pick off any enemies that appear to go after your Golems in the meantime.

Trial Map 21



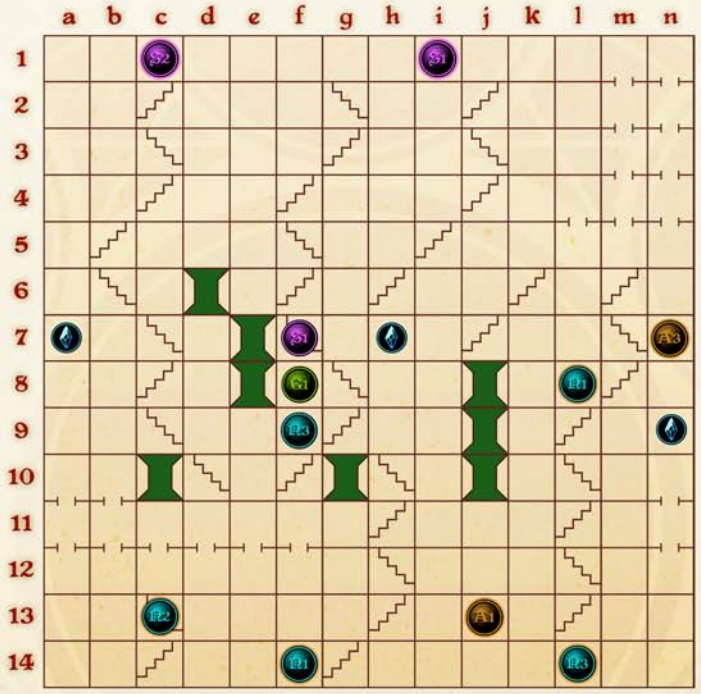
Now you have to take out Chartreuse's Runes, but can't attack Opalneria's despite the way her forces constantly harass you. Begin by maxing out your Purgatory and making a bunch of Skullmages, since their attacks can easily dispatch Opalneria's Astral attackers. Once you have units to defend your base, make a Hell Gate and a Gehenna. Max both of them out and make five Demons. Then, max out your Acheron and make a Charon. Load up your Demons and immediately get five more to manufacturing. Have Charon fly right up to Chartreuse's Runes and unload his Demons, starting with the Laboratory at k9. This is somewhat risky, but chances are your Charon can unload his cargo and get back to your base area without taking lethal damage. Then you can just advent an Obelisk to heal him back up, then send him back in with more Demons to a different Rune. If you barrage Chartreuse's area with Demons quickly enough, they can take out the Runes in the area before the Blobs and Homonculus take their toll on them. Three boatloads, five for each Rune, should do the trick if your luck holds out.

Trial Map 22



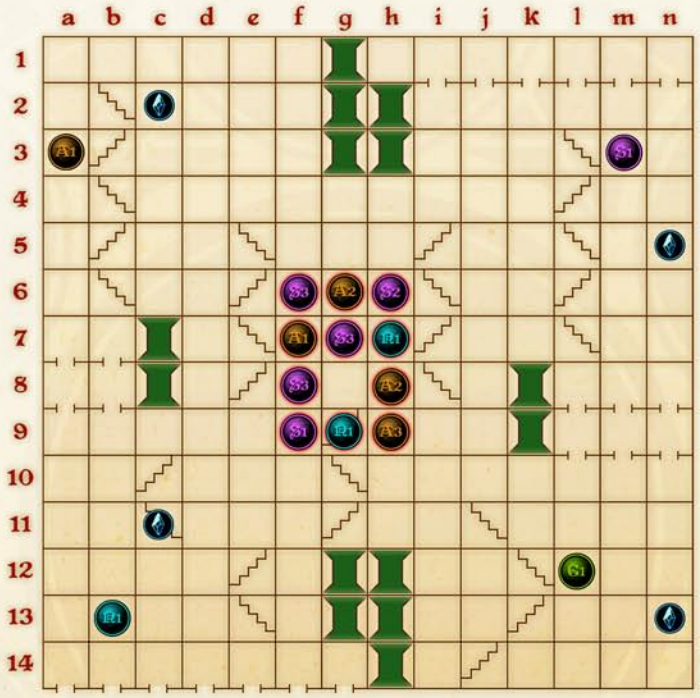
Going after Gammel's forces instead of Advocat's on this map is interesting, largely because Advocat can end up doing more damage to Gammel than you do. Create a Titania and an Engraver and level them up to their maximum. Also level the Laboratory, Purgatory and Hades Gate you start with to maximum. Use Skullmages and Phantoms to patrol your base and handle the enemy Phantoms and Demons Advocat likes to send after you. Go after Gammel's forces with Morning Stars and Golems, with a few Homonculus along for support. After you fight with Gammel's forces for awhile, Advocat begins fielding Dragons. His Dragons storm through Gammel's territory, attacking all the while and wiping out a good portion of Gammel's army. They can even take out Runes for you. Use Morning Stars, who take negligible damage from the Dragons, to hold them back while Golems attack from behind. Take care of rival Morning Stars by using Clairvoyance on them. Provided you keep your base well-guarded and field large numbers of units against Gammel's forces, you should be able to win.

Trial Map 23



There are only two differences between the Trial and original version of this battle. In the Trial version, Margarita sends forces down to attack you on occasion, and you only have twenty minutes to win the battle. This makes no real difference in the strategy you use to clear it. Just leave more Demons and Skullmages around your base to defend it, and otherwise proceed normally.

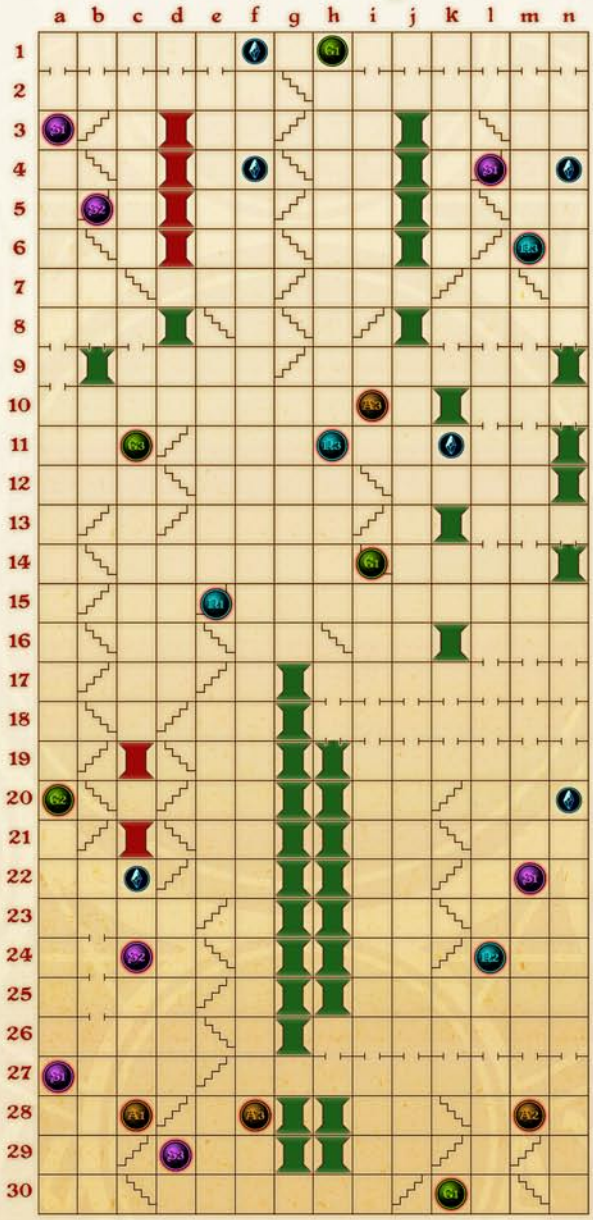
Trial Map 24



There's no 'win button' strategy for this battle, mostly it's about patience and planning. Generally you want to use a variety of basic defensive tricks you learned in previous battles, and just make sure you repeat them around all four of your base areas. Turn each Crystal into a Sanctuary and mine it out for mana, both to pay for new Runes and dissuade enemies from attacking your Runes directly. When you build extra Runes, try to position them so that enemies will be tempted to attack them before going after the starting Runes. Each area needs some mobile attack units and a large high-power unit around for anticipating enemy attacks. A few support units like Grimalkin and Homonculus don't hurt, but don't overrely on them.

You may think of adventing Symbols around the stairways leading into your areas, but they won't do much good when Chimeras and Dragons inevitably attack your bases. Golems can perform the same duty more efficiently. You need to carefully balance your total number of units between the four bases, to make sure none of the bases are left significantly lacking for defensive options. You also want to rein in any defenders that look like they may be rushing in to attack the central cluster of monsters, which is a suicidal maneuver that's also likely to make the monsters waiting there more aggressive.

Trial Map 25



The only difference between this battle and the battle on Loop 5, Day 5 is about two thousand less starting mana. That isn't really enough to have a significant impact on your battle strategy. You can clear this map using, more or less, the exact same methods you used to beat the game the first time. As with the first battle, once you've cleared out enemies and Runes down to around row 15, victory is just a matter of time.